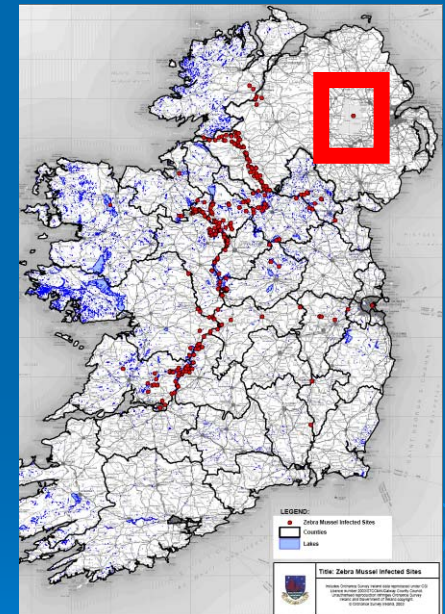


Early Colonisation of the Zebra Mussel *Dreissena Polymorpha* in Lough Neagh

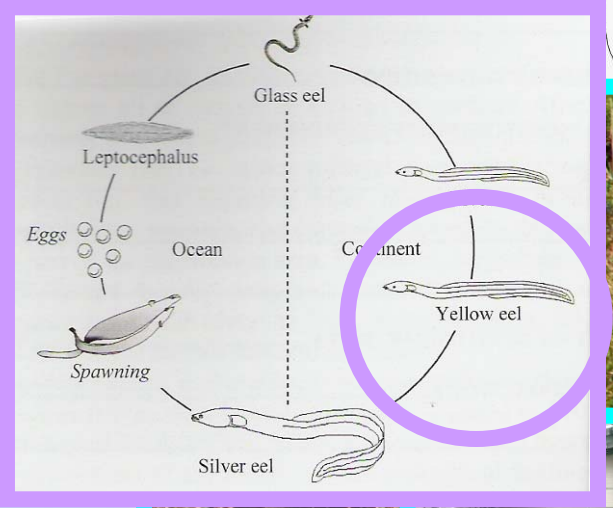
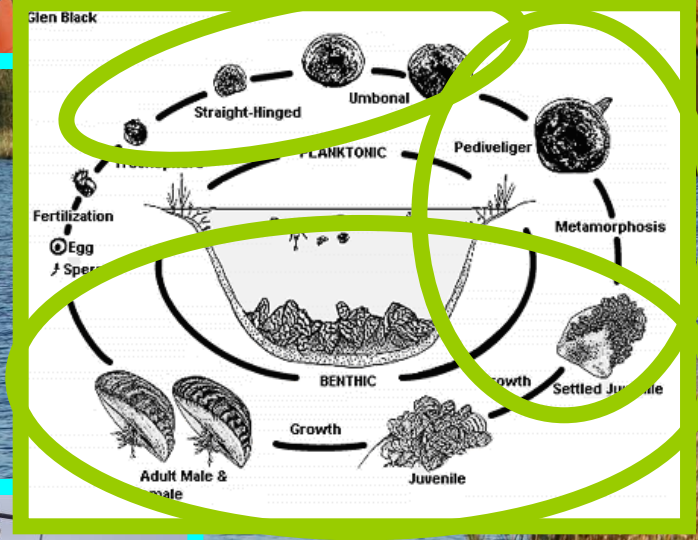
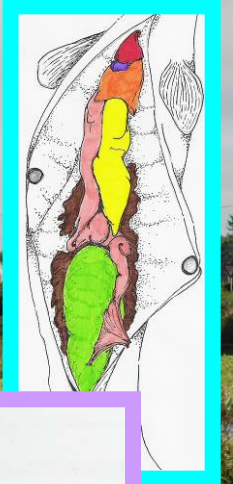
Sarah McLean Queens University Belfast Supervisors: Dr R Rosell Dr D
Roberts Funded by AFBINI/DARD

- Lough Neagh in advanced state of eutrophy
- Historically mesotrophic
- 2005 FIVE adult zebra mussels reported on a boat in Lough Neagh.
- Preliminary study by AFBI: 44 settled juveniles found on debris taken from all of the Lough shores
- 2006-2007 All stages of the life cycle observed within the Lough, inferring the presence of a breeding population
- 2007- Present continued monitoring of population spread



Aims:

To document early settlement patterns of the zebra mussel *Dreissena polymorpha* in Lough Neagh and assess its possible impacts on the ecology and biological status of the European eel *Anguilla anguilla*



CONCLUSIONS.....

- **Population in lag phase**
- **Adults only observed on net hulls in SE corner**
- **The adults observed are likely to have settled 2006, 2007 & 2008**
- **Multiplates settlement disks and plankton surveys show breeding population exists**
- **Potential for changes in eel population**
 - **Change in benthos**
 - **Change in light penetration**

IMPACTS STILL UNKNOWN!!!!