

Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Fact Sheet

European Frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* L. Frogbit Family Vermont Class B Noxious Weed

Description: European frogbit is a floating-leaved aquatic plant that bears small white flowers. The plant has well-developed roots but is free-floating, not anchored in the sediment. Leaves are roundish and deeply notched at the base. Several plants may be connected together by runners. Reproduction by runners can be rapid over a single season. The plant also reproduces by seed and winter buds. The buds develop in the fall, separate from the plant and sink to the bottom where they overwinter, and then rise to the surface in the spring to form a new plant.

Habitat: European frogbit can be found in lakes, ponds, and rivers.

Threats: European frogbit is capable of producing dense mats of vegetation that completely cover the water surface. These dense mats may shade out native vegetation, thereby reducing plant diversity. Where plant beds are dense they may entangle themselves around motorboat propellers, and make swimming difficult.

Distribution: As its name implies, European frogbit is native to Europe. It was first found in the wild in North America in the Rideau Canal at Ottawa, Ontario. Since that time it has spread down the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers. It has also been reported from Quebec near the mouth of the Richelieu River and in New York near Canton and Watertown. Populations in Vermont are located in Lake Champlain. At this time, the majority of the Vermont population of frogbit appears to be confined to the southern part of the lake and is not causing any problems. However, this species is reported to be a nuisance in southern Canada and northern New York due to its invasiveness.



Watson, L., and Dallwitz, M.J. 1998. (1992 onwards). *The Families of Flowering Plants: Descriptions, Illustrations, Identification, and Information Retrieval*. Version: 12th.

Control: Little information is available on the control of European frogbit. Based on the plant's habit, mechanical and hand removal would most likely be effective. It is not known whether biological or chemical controls are effective on European frogbit.

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European Frogbit

Frogs bit Family (*Hydrocharitaceae*)

References:

Countryman, W.D. 1978. *Nuisance Aquatic Plants of Lake Champlain*. Lake Champlain Basin Study.

Hellquist, C.B. *Aquatic Weed Species for Possible Legislation*. Department of Biology. North Adams State College, North Adams, MA.



For more information about Vermont's invasive exotic plant species or if you would like to know how you can help, please contact:

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