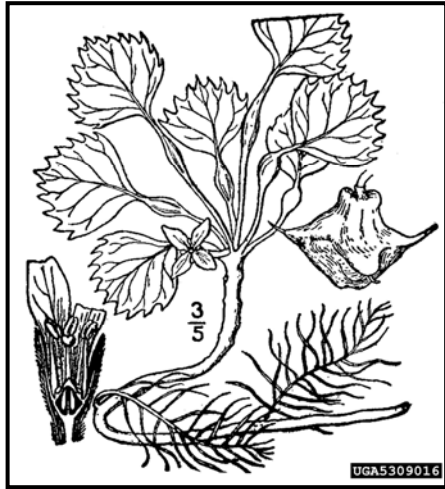


CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*)

Also called: European water chestnut



barbed spines, ripening from July until frost. Develops underwater. Fruits can remain viable for up to twelve years. Water currents, wildlife and boats distribute seeds.

Look-alikes: None.

Habitat: Ponds, lakes, rivers, streams. Most often found in slow-moving, nutrient rich waters.



Family name: Loosestrife family (*Lythraceae*)

Native range: Eurasia

General: Aquatic annual that grows as a rooted, floating plant.

Leaves: Floating leaves form a rosette of triangular, sharply toothed leaves of 0.75 to 1.5 inches long with stems up to 6 inches long. These leaves have prominent veins and short, stiff hairs below. Submerged leaves are feathery and up to 6 inches long.

Flowers: Tiny, white, four petalled, located in the center of the rosette, appearing in July and until a killing frost.

Fruit: One inch wide nut-like structure with four



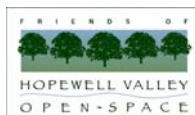
Threats to native habitats: Water chestnut creates dense mats which can outcompete native vegetation. These plants also have little nutritional value for wildlife. Water chestnut degrades waterways for wildlife, recreation and commercial use.

NJ Status: Water chestnut is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.

Commercial Availability: Not found.

Sources: Forestry Images: Forest Health, Natural Resources & Silviculture Images: <http://www.forestryimages.org>
<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specield=25>

Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2nd ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 655.



Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST) is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. Please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560 or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852.

