

# Water chestnut

## *Trapa natans*

### Description

This species is listed on the Michigan prohibited aquatic plant list. The toothed, triangular leaf with inflated petioles is distinctive throughout the growing season.

### Habit

Aquatic; rooted; floating; mat-forming annual in shallow or deep freshwater; grows in depths of up to 4.6 m (15 ft).

### Leaves

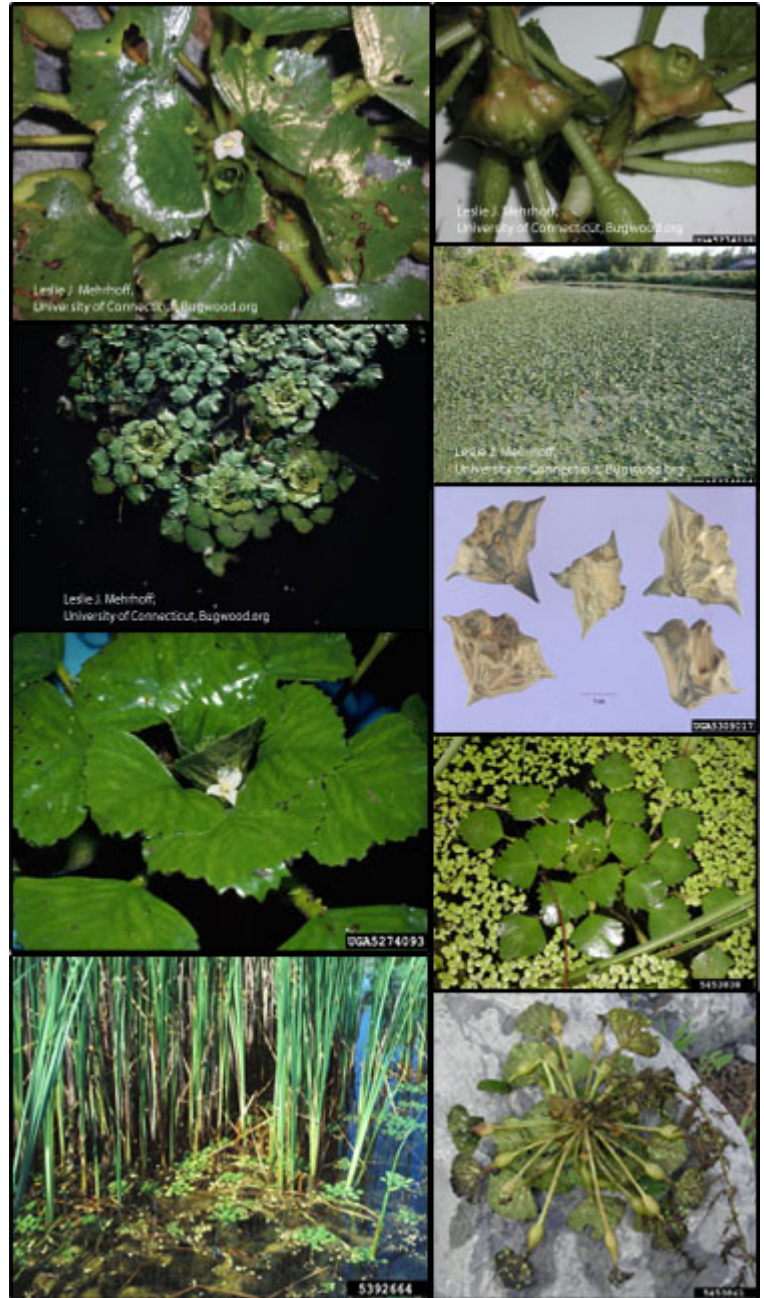
Toothed floating leaves have inflated petioles and are arranged in a rosette, while its submerged leaves are feathery.

### Stems

Cord-like; spongy; buoyant; can reach lengths up to 16 ft; anchored to the bed of the waterbody by branched roots.

### Flowers

Small, white in color, 4 petals; bloom from July to





first frost.

### **Fruits and Seeds**

Spiny nut appears where flowers were. 2-4 1.3  
cm (1/2 in) long, sharp, barbed spines.

### **Habitat**

Native to Europe and Asia. Found in freshwater lakes, ponds, canals, and slow waters.

### **Reproduction**

By floating rosettes and its single-seeded spiny nut, which attaches to boats or animals. The spines can pierce shoes.

### **Similar**

Two-horned water chestnut (*Trapa bispinosa*).

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Complete removal of plants is imperative. Eradication is difficult because seeds may lay dormant for up to 12 years.

### **Credits**

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