

# Flowering rush

# Butomus umbellatus

# Description

This species is listed as a restricted noxious weed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Flowering rush occurred in the Detroit River as early as 1918 but has become a much greater problem in recent years.

#### Habit

Perennial, erect, floating or submersed in water up to 2 m (6 ft) deep.

#### Leaves

Linear, up to 1 m (39 in) long and 0.5-1 cm (0.2-0.4 in) wide, growing from the base, triangular in cross-section.

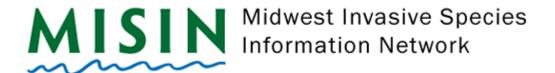
#### Stems

Smooth; erect; round; 1-1.5 m (3-4.5 ft) tall.

## **Flowers**

Pale pink, rose or white in color; 3 petals and 3 petal-like sepals, held in a many-flowered, rounded cluster with 3 bracts; held at the top of





the stem, not all populations produce flowers although many in Michigan do.

#### Fruits and Seeds

Fruit a beaked follicle, not all populations produce fertile seed but at least some Michigan populations do so.

## Habitat

Native to Eurasia. Found in rivers, lakes, emergent wetlands and ditches in waters up to 3 m (~10 ft) in depth.

# Reproduction

By stout creeping rhizomes, vegetative bulbils that form in rhizome axils, some populations produce fertile seed also, seeds float and are water-dispersed, seeds, like those of many wetland species are long-lived.

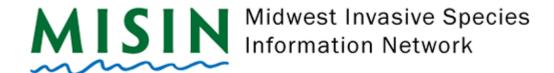
#### Similar

Non-flowering specimens may resemble young bur-reeds (Sparganium spp.) or bulrushes (Scirppus spp.) as they may have similar leaves.

## **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Monitor lake shores, stream banks and ditches, particular where water levels have dropped; plant is identifiable in summer when fruit or seed are present. Cutting flowering rush under water may reduce population density, remove all plant parts; digging out isolated plants may prevent spread but bulbils on rhizomes must be removed also, do not compost near wetlands or water; control with herbicide difficult. Permits are usually required for herbicide use in water bodies and wetlands. For information see MDEQs Aquatic Nuisance Control website at: https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3313\_3681\_3710---,00.html

#### **Credits**



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