



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Invasive species alert: European frog-bit detected in Novi, MI water bodies

The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and the Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (OC CISMA) have confirmed the presence of [European frog-bit](#), a prohibited aquatic invasive plant, in 9 small retention ponds and lakes in the city of Novi.

European frog-bit was first verified in Michigan in 1996 along the Great Lakes waterways in southeastern Michigan and has since been found in areas along Lake Huron, in western Michigan, and the eastern Upper Peninsula. The detections in Novi water-bodies represent the first known locations of this invasive plant in Oakland County. One occurrence of frog-bit has also been confirmed in southern-bordering Wayne County.

The plant was initially identified near Novi by Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) staff in Maybury State Park in June 2018. The report triggered a response from EGLE and DNR's Aquatic Invasive Plant Response Team. Later that summer a city of Novi official identified 2 additional occurrences in retention ponds around Novi. The Aquatic Invasive Plant Response Team is currently assessing the risk level of the situation and working with the Oakland County CISMA and other community partners to develop an action plan.

What is European frog-bit?

A native of Europe and parts of Africa and Asia, European frog-bit is an aquatic plant with small (half-inch to 2.5 inch), heart-shaped leaves resembling miniature water lilies. Unlike similar aquatic plants, European frog-bit does not anchor its roots in the lake or stream bed but remains free-floating. Three-petaled white flowers with yellow centers appear briefly sometime between mid-July and mid-August.



Frog-bit illustration by Bruce Kerr; Frog-bit photograph courtesy Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Why is it a problem?

The plant quickly forms dense colonies or mats in shallow, slow-moving waters. These thick mats can prevent native plant growth, make movement difficult for ducks and large fish, and cause problems for boaters, anglers and swimmers.

European frog-bit is spread by plant fragments or by turions - small, quarter-inch buds that break off the plant and overwinter in lake or stream beds. Plant parts easily can be transported to new water bodies on boat motors or trailers, fishing gear and other recreational equipment.

What can be done?

“Detecting European frog-bit...is a call to action to all lake, stream and wetland users to clean, drain and dry boats and gear,” said Kevin Walters, an invasive species aquatic biologist with the EGLE. He also stated that everyone should “take the simple steps of removing all plants and debris from boats, trailers and gear and draining bilges and live wells before leaving a site” and wanted to remind boaters that it is now the law in Michigan.

Walters said that even waders, fishing nets and inner tubes can harbor invasive species and should be thoroughly dried in the sun or cleaned with a 2-percent bleach solution before being used at a different location.

What if I see European frog-bit?

Anyone can help by reporting suspected European frog-bit. First, become familiar with identifying the plant. MISIN offers a short [identification tutorial](#) which helps distinguish between European frog-bit and similar aquatic plants. If you encounter European frog-bit on the water, take some photos and report it to the CISMA.

You can also help by volunteering! Erica Clites, Oakland County CISMA Coordinator explains: “You can take action to stop the spread of invasive species by helping us determine the extent of frog-bit in Novi area ponds and lakes.” If you are a landowner in the Novi area, look for a message from the CISMA requesting to survey water bodies on your property for frog-bit.

For more information on European frog-bit and other invasive species, visit Michigan’s



invasive species website at www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies. For more information about the Oakland County CISMA visit our website at <https://www.sixriversrlc.org/oakland-county-cisma>.

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