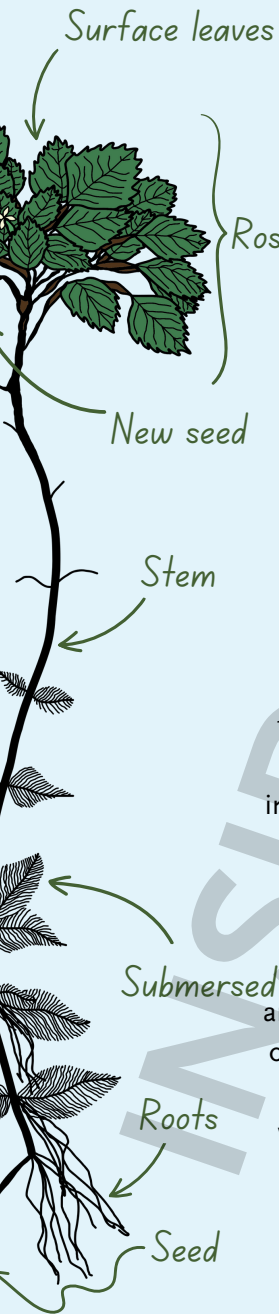


# Introduction



Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) is an invasive, non-native aquatic plant that is spreading throughout New England and the Connecticut River Watershed. It's also located in some of the mid-Atlantic states.

Water chestnut was first brought from Europe to the United States in the 1800s, when it was introduced to nearby waterbodies. Eventually, the invasive found its way into the Connecticut River.

Water chestnut is an annual species, which reproduces only by seeds. These bright green floating plants produce seeds which can lie dormant but viable on a lake bottom for up to 12 years.

Persistent removal of plants prior to seed drop via hand-pulling can dramatically reduce spread over time!

# Volunteer

No boat? No problem!

The Connecticut River Conservancy and partners host water chestnut pulls in a wide variety of locations - some of which provide rental boats to volunteers for free. CRC events are led by staff members with pulling experience and advice to assist and teach novice pullers. CRC holds events annually from June through August - come join us!



## Learn more

413.722.2020 x207  
reportAIS@ctriver.org  
volunteer@ctriver.org  
ctriver.org/waterchestnut

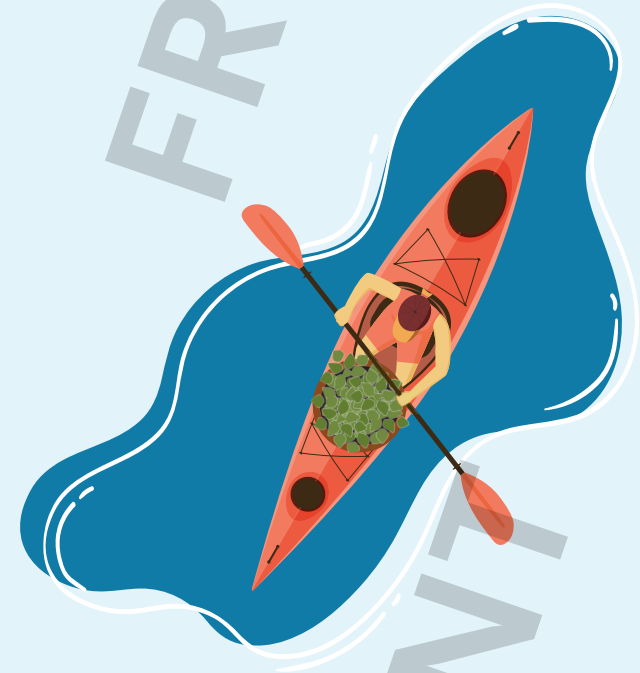


Connecticut River  
Conservancy



Connecticut River Conservancy's

## Guide to Hand Pulling Invasive Water Chestnut



## Techniques for Improving Impact and Efficiency

# Survey and Pull

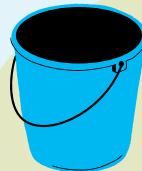
Surveying is an important tool for controlling a water chestnut infestation. Identifying populations of water chestnut early, while only a few plants exist, saves a lot of future work. Surveys for water chestnut infestations should begin in early to mid June and continue until September.

Water chestnut sites should be inspected monthly even after a hand-pull. It is essential that water chestnut plants be pulled by August, when mature seeds begin to drop off the plants.

When pulling a water chestnut plant by hand, gently pull loose and extract the whole stem and root. A common technique is to wrap or spaghetti the stem around your hand, pull up more root, and repeat until you reach the end. The end of a root typically looks like long and coarse purplish-white strings.

Harvesting the whole root system will prevent the growth of small rosettes that are sprouting on the same plant but have not surfaced yet. It is easier to pull plants and roots earlier in the season while they are small.

Late season plants with fully mature, sharply spiked seeds, should be pulled gently and flipped upside down while retrieving them, to prevent seeds from falling into the water. Spoils should be dumped well above the high-water line, at least 100 yards.



## Supplies

### What boat to use?

Kayaks are maneuverable, light, and can reach shallow or densely vegetated areas. Canoes require two people for steering and propulsion, and can carry more water chestnut plants further. Either works well in various scenarios.

**Don't forget lifejackets and paddles for all!** As well as drinking water, gloves for collecting, and a bailer per boat as water inevitably pours in during collection.



### Collect and carry using one or more of the following:

1. Burlap sacks – reusable, compostable, and drains.
2. Shopping/laundry baskets – reusable, waterproof, lightweight, and drains.
3. Contractor buckets – small for smaller loads and can be used to drain plant load before dumping in bags or baskets.
4. Contractor trash bags – lightweight, heavy-duty bags can be reused, drain water by tearing a whole in a corner.