

## **WHAT IS AN INVASIVE SPECIES?**

The term "invasive species" is used to describe non-native organisms that aggressively compete with, and displace, locally adapted native species. Invasive species can have a profound, negative impact on biodiversity, agriculture, recreation, human health and our economy.

## **Mission of the SLELO PRISM**

The mission of the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) is to protect the natural and cultural integrity of aquatic and terrestrial areas from invasive species. SLELO PRISM includes; St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Oswego, Oneida, and Lewis counties outside of the Adirondack Park blue line.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

SLELO PRISM functions as a collaborative effort between principal and cooperating partners throughout the area. Some partners include:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension County Offices
- County Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- The Nature Conservancy
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
- New York State Department of Transportation
- New York Sea Grant
- Tug Hill Commission
- Ducks Unlimited
- Fort Drum Military Installation
- Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust
- Save The River
- Audubon - Central NY Chapter
- Thousand Islands Land Trust
- New York Power Authority
- Central NY Regional Development Planning Board

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION or to REPORT AN INFESTATION CONTACT:**

**St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management**

### **SLELO PRISM Main Office**

**(315) 387-3600 x25**

c/o The Nature Conservancy

**St. Lawrence County CCE  
315-379-9192**

**Jefferson County CCE  
315-788-8450**

**Lewis County SWCD  
315-376-6122**

**Oneida County CCE  
315-736-3394**

**Oswego County SWCD  
315-592-9663**

*Or Visit Us Online At*  
**[www.sleloinvasives.org](http://www.sleloinvasives.org)**

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Water chestnut removal: Erica Burgeson taken by Katie Little , TNC

**SLELO PRISM**



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St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management

# **What You Should Know About Water Chestnut An Aquatic Invasive species**



**SLELO PRISM**

*“Teaming up to stop the spread of invasive species”*

[www.sleloinvasives.org](http://www.sleloinvasives.org)

# European Water Chestnut

(*Trapa natans*)

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European water chestnut is a fast-growing, aquatic plant from southern Europe and Asia. It can be detrimental to aquatic ecosystems as it completely dominates surface waters by forming large mats that shade out native aquatic vegetation. This aquatic invasive may also reduce dissolved oxygen levels for fish and other aquatic organisms. Once dry its hard, pointy seeds can penetrate shoe leather if stepped on.



Removal of hundreds of pounds of water chestnut from waters within the SLELO PRISM and the northeast U.S.

## Getting Involved

Water chestnut infestations are much easier to control when newly established. Learning to identify water chestnut and reporting infestations immediately is essential to slowing their spread. Contact information by county is listed on the brochure back cover.



Ripening water chestnut seeds.



Water chestnut rosette (floating portion).



Matured water chestnut seeds.

## Control Options

**Small infestations:** infestations can be managed by hand-pulling rosettes (floating portion) after the seeds have formed but before they are ripe (before mid August).

**Large infestations:** Large infestations can be managed by mechanical harvesting or with herbicide.

**Mechanical harvesting:** is the mechanized non-selective cutting of aquatic plants. Harvest should be completed before seeds ripen. Optimal harvesting time would be mid to late July in Northern NY.

**Disposal:** Both hand-pulling and mechanical harvesting will require the responsible disposal of water chestnut. This can be accomplished by drying the waterchestnuts in heavy black bags on land before transporting them to a dump site.

**Herbicides** may also be used for large infestations. Herbicides are effective in killing the annual growth of the plant but not the ripened seeds, which can remain viable up to 12 years! Therefore, herbicides should be applied before seeds are produced. **In NY, permits are required for herbicide application and must be applied by a licensed applicator.**

Because water chestnut produces a large number of seeds, treatments may have to be repeated until the seed bank in the sediment is exhausted.

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