

Flowering rush

Butomus umbellatus

Butomaceae Family

Key identifying traits

- ❑ Freshwater aquatic plant resembling a large sedge
- ❑ Leaves are sword shaped, narrow and triangular in cross section
- ❑ Flowering stems are fleshy and spirally twisted
- ❑ Showy, pink flowers grow in umbels at ends of stems (but not all plants flower) June-August
- ❑ Grows as a shoreline emergent plant with upright, stiff foliage or as a wholly to partially submersed plant with flexible leaves
- ❑ Fleshy, rhizomatous roots with "bulbils"

Biology and ecology

- Perennial plant reproducing by rhizomes, bulbils and, possibly, seeds
- Grows along muddy shores of lakes, streams, ditches, but can grow out into water as deep as 20' and be totally submersed
- It is the single member of it's family-it is not a true "rush"
- It is native to Eurasia

Control

Prevention - Learn to identify plants; looks like a large grass or sedge-must learn to distinguish

Biological - No known biological control in our area

Cultural - Does not seem to invade healthy shoreline communities as quickly as disturbed sites, but it can still invade

Mechanical - Digging and covering control trials are currently underway-it may be difficult to remove all root parts. Raking and cutting are not effective

Chemical - Plants that are mostly above water are more susceptible to foliar treatment with aquatic herbicides, but control has been inconsistent. Trials are underway in Montana, Idaho and WA.

Flower Photo Leslie J. Mehrhoff, Univ. of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

Where found – Found along shore and well out into the waters of Lake Spokane in 2010. Also found in Whatcom, Benton, Yakima and Pend Oreille counties. Large infestation in Flathead Lake, MT and smaller populations elsewhere in the state and in Idaho.



Jenifer Parsons, DOE, holding plant. Top & root photos hers.



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