

## ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL WETLAND PLANTS OF CONCERN IN NORTHERN WI

Prepared by Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department, spring 2014



### Flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*)

**When to look:** Mid to late summer in shallow water when the plants are in bloom. Throughout the aquatic growing season in deeper water where blossoms do not form. (Floating ribbon-like leaves may be confused with wild celery (*Vallisneria americana*)).

**Where to look:** Wetlands, lakeshores, slow-moving rivers, and in water up to 10 feet deep.

**Key features:** A rhizomatous perennial aquatic plant capable of growing as an emergent in shallow water or submersed in water up to 10 feet deep. Aerial leaves are thin, linear, pointed, 3 feet long or more, untoothed, parallel veined, twisted, triangular in cross-section and arise in two rows along the rhizome/base. When in deep water the leaves are limp and floating, reaching the surface where they move with the water, and the plant does not bloom. When in shallow water the leaves stand erect above the water, resembling bulrushes, and the plant blooms. Flowers grow on tall, cylindrical stalks in round-topped umbrella-like clusters of 20-50 flowers having three large pink petals. The three sepals under the petals are also pink and look like small petals, thus the flower is sometimes described as having six pink petals. Bulbils (little bulb-like plant sprouts) may be present at the base of flower stalks and at the roots. Bulbils released from the plants can float freely to start new plants elsewhere. Rhizomes are fleshy and grow trailing along the ground.

#### Sources for additional information:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/fact/floweringrush.html>

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/flowering-rush.aspx>

<http://www.issg.org/database/species/ecology.asp?si=610&>

[http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_PLANTMATERIALS/publications/mtpmstn10617.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_PLANTMATERIALS/publications/mtpmstn10617.pdf)