

EUROPEAN WATERCLOVER

Marsilea quadrifolia

Description: European waterclover is a rooted, aquatic fern. Thin green petioles (leaf stalks) form off of creeping rhizomes. Petioles are typically 2-6 inches long, with single leaves at, near, or just above the water surface. Leaves resemble 4-leaf clovers; the plant is sometimes called water shamrock. Leaves are 2 double leaflets, triangular in shape and hairless. European waterclover spreads by rhizomes and sporocarps. Sporocarps are small, thick, oval, and hairy when young.



Current Midwest Distribution, including Ontario

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|  Not Known |  Isolated |
|  Locally Abundant |  Widespread |

Ecological threat: European waterclover can form monotypic stands that displace native aquatic plants. It thrives in quiet ponds and streams with slow-moving water. It is sold for water gardening, giving it the potential to escape in natural areas through careless disposal. Sporocarps can spread European waterclover long distances downstream from existing populations.

Native Range: Europe

Current North American Range: New England, and west to Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, and Ohio.

For information on **aquatic plant management**, see http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ws/ws_21.pdf.

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**Early detection and rapid response can help
stop the spread!**