

Aquatic Plant

Flowering Rush

**I. Current Status and Distribution** *Butomus umbellatus*

**a. Range** **Global/Continental** **Wisconsin**

**Native Range**  
Africa, Asia, Europe<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: U.S and Canada Distribution Map<sup>2</sup>

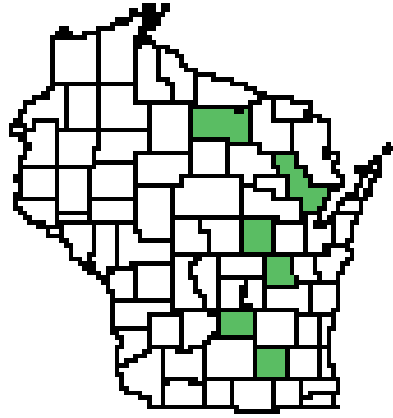


Figure 2: WI Distribution Map<sup>3</sup>

**Abundance/Range**  
Widespread:  
Locally Abundant:  
Sparse:

Northeastern U.S.; Great Lakes region  
Northern U.S.  
Western U.S.

Not widespread  
Several Wisconsin populations  
Oneida County<sup>4</sup>

**Range Expansion**  
Date Introduced:  
Rate of Spread:

St. Lawrence River, Quebec, 1897<sup>5</sup>  
Slow, locally rapid

Oconto County, 1958<sup>3</sup>  
Slow, locally rapid

**Density**  
Risk of Monoculture:  
Facilitated By:

Medium<sup>5</sup>  
Diploid populations<sup>6,7</sup>; drawdown or drought<sup>8</sup>

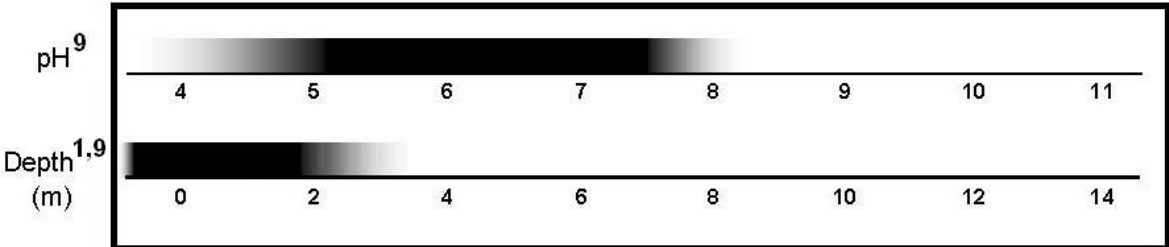
High  
Unknown

**b. Habitat**

Lakes, ponds, reservoirs, wetlands, wadeable streams, rivers, ditches, riparian zones, high and low energy systems<sup>1</sup>

**Tolerance**

Chart of tolerances: Increasingly dark color indicates increasingly optimal range



**Preferences**

Fluctuating water levels; diploids prefer acidic soils with low nutrients, triploids prefer alkaline soils<sup>9</sup>; non-shaded areas<sup>1</sup>

**c. Regulation**

Noxious/Regulated<sup>2</sup>: CT, VT, WA

Minnesota Regulations: *Prohibited*; One may not possess, import, purchase, propagate, or transport

Michigan Regulations: *Restricted*; One may not knowingly possess or introduce

Washington Regulations: *Secondary Species of Concern*; Class A Noxious Weed; State Wetland and Aquatic or Noxious Weed Quarantine List

<b>II. Establishment Potential and Life History Traits</b>	
<b>a. Life History</b>	Emergent, perennial, monocotyledonous forb <sup>2</sup>
<b>Fecundity</b>	Medium
<b>Reproduction</b>  Importance of Seeds: Vegetative:	Sexual; Asexual 2 cytotypes: diploid more fertile than sexually sterile triploid <sup>6,10,11</sup> ; diploid is the most prominent cytotype of the Great Lakes region <sup>6,7</sup> Low <i>in situ</i> <sup>8</sup> ; low to medium in laboratory <sup>11,12</sup> ; seeds are long-lived <sup>5</sup> Most important; 95% of 38 populations have the same genotype, indicating clonal reproduction <sup>7</sup>
<b>Hybridization</b>	Undocumented
<b>Overwintering</b> Winter Tolerance: Phenology:	High; hardy in zones 3-10 <sup>1</sup> Emerges early relative to natives <sup>12</sup> ; flowers from July to September and seeds ripen from August to September (in U.S.) <sup>1</sup>
<b>b. Establishment</b>	
<b>Climate</b> Weather: Wisconsin-Adapted: Climate Change:	Fluctuating water levels (particularly decreases) spur germination Yes Undocumented effect on growth and distribution
<b>Taxonomic Similarity</b> Wisconsin Natives: Other US Exotics:	Low Low
<b>Competition</b> Natural Predators: Natural Pathogens: Competitive Strategy:  Known Interactions:	Ducks, muskrats <sup>1,8</sup> Undocumented Rapid colonization following drop in water levels; long lived mobile propagules <sup>13</sup> Documentation of competition with <i>Salix</i> sp. (willows) and <i>Typha</i> sp. (cattails) <sup>5</sup>
<b>Reproduction</b> Rate of Spread: Adaptive Strategies:	High Rhizomes allow for local dispersal; bulbils from root and umbel and long lived seeds disperse over long distances <sup>1</sup> ; can extend distribution to depth ranges which are intolerant to other emergent species <sup>1</sup>
<b>Timeframe</b>	13 years from introduction to geographic saturation in St. Lawrence River <sup>14</sup>
<b>c. Dispersal</b>	
Intentional: Unintentional: Propagule Pressure:	Ornamental cultivation <sup>13</sup> Water flow, muskrat activity, boating, ballast water <sup>1,13</sup> ; water birds <sup>9</sup> High; seeds and bulbils can be accidentally transported



Figure 3: Courtesy of Gary Fewless, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay<sup>15</sup>

Figure 4: Courtesy of Emmet Judziewicz, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point<sup>16</sup>

### III. Damage Potential

#### a. Ecosystem Impacts

<b>Composition</b>	Native plant richness and abundance decreases <sup>1</sup>
<b>Structure</b>	Monocultures
<b>Function</b>	Undocumented
<b>Allelopathic Effects</b>	Undocumented
<b>Keystone Species</b>	Undocumented
<b>Ecosystem Engineer</b>	Undocumented
<b>Sustainability</b>	Undocumented
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Decreases
<b>Biotic Effects</b>	Undocumented
<b>Abiotic Effects</b>	Undocumented
<b>Benefits</b>	Muskrat habitat

#### b. Socio-Economic Effects

<b>Benefits</b>	Ornamental plant, edible plant <sup>1</sup>
<b>Caveats</b>	Risk of release and population expansion outweighs benefits of use
<b>Impacts of Restriction</b>	Increase in monitoring, education, and research costs
<b>Negatives</b>	Thick stands can hinder boat traffic and recreation <sup>1</sup> ; may threaten economically important species such as wild rice <sup>6,7</sup> ; decreases native diversity and abundance
<b>Expectations</b>	More negative impacts can be expected in systems with fluctuating water levels
<b>Cost of Impacts</b>	Decreased recreational and aesthetic value; decline in ecological integrity; increased research expenses
<b>“Eradication” Cost</b>	Quite expensive

### IV. Control and Prevention

#### a. Detection

<b>Crypsis:</b>	High; confused with <i>Sparganium</i> spp. (bur-reeds) when sterile <sup>1,13</sup> but unique when flowering
<b>Benefits of Early Response:</b>	High; may limit local spread, individual pioneers could be removed by hand-digging <sup>1</sup>

<b>b. Control</b>	
<b>Management Goal 1</b>	Nuisance relief
Tool:	Chemical
Caveat:	Ineffective due to herbicide washing off narrow-leaves <sup>1</sup>
Cost:	Undocumented
Efficacy, Time Frame:	Most effective on dry banks or in very shallow water; herbicide may affect other emergent plants such as cattails <sup>1</sup>
Tool:	Mechanical
Caveat:	Repeat cuttings below water will reduce density but not kill plant <sup>1</sup> ; disturbance to roots will promote release of bulbils, thus all of cut material needs to be removed
Cost:	Affordable to expensive depending on scale
Efficacy, Time Frame:	Multiple times per summer every year
Tool:	Combination approach
Caveat:	Labor intensive and expensive, but can be effective
Cost:	Expensive
Efficacy, Time Frame:	Effective control combines herbicide to kill vegetative parts and mechanical harvest to remove bulbils

<sup>1</sup> Global Invasive Species Database. 2005. *Butomus umbellatus*. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: <http://www.invasivespecies.net/database/species/ecology.asp?si=610&fr=1&sts=sss>

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service. 2010. The PLANTS Database. National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA, USA. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=BUUM>

<sup>3</sup> University of Wisconsin – Madison. 2005. Family Butomaceae. Wisconsin Botanical Information System, Wisflora. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: <http://www.botany.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/detail.cgi?SpCode=BUTUMB>

<sup>4</sup> Herman, L. 2007. Personal communication.

<sup>5</sup> Invasive Plants of Natural Habitats in Canada. 1999. Flowering-rush (*Butomus umbellatus* L.). Canadian Wildlife Service - Environment Canada. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/eee-ias/78D62AA2-55A4-4E2F-AA08-538E1051A893/invasives.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Lui, K., F.L. Thompson and C.G. Eckert. 2005. Causes and consequences of extreme variation in reproductive strategy and vegetative growth among invasive populations of a clonal aquatic plant, *Butomus umbellatus* L. (Butomaceae). *Biological Invasions* 7(3):427-444.

<sup>7</sup> Klüber, A. and C.G. Eckert. 2005. Interaction between founder effect and selection during biological invasion in an aquatic plant. *Evolution* 59(9):1900-1913.

<sup>8</sup> Hroudová, Z., A. Krahulcová, P. Zákravský and V. Jarolímová. 1996. The biology of *Butomus umbellatus* in shallow waters with fluctuating water level. *Hydrobiologia* 340:27-30.

<sup>9</sup> Hroudová, Z. and P. Zákravský. 1993. Ecology of two cytotypes of *Butomus umbellatus* III. Distribution and habitat differentiation in the Czech and Slovak Republics. *Folia Geobotanica & Phytotaxonomica* 28:425-435.

<sup>10</sup> Eckert, C.G., K. Lui, K. Bronson, P. Corradini and A. Bruneau. 2003. Population genetic consequences of extreme variation in sexual and clonal reproduction in an aquatic plant. *Molecular Ecology* 12:331-344.

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- <sup>11</sup> Eckert, C.G., B. Massonnet and J.J. Thomas. 2000. Variation in sexual and clonal reproduction among introduced populations of flowering rush, *Butomus umbellatus* (Butomaceae). *Canadian Journal of Botany* 78:437-446.
- <sup>12</sup> Hroudová, Z. and P. Zákavský. 2003. Germination responses of diploid *Butomus umbellatus* to light, temperature and flooding. *Flora* 198(1):37-44.
- <sup>13</sup> Les, D.H. and L.J. Mehrhoff. 1999. Introduction of nonindigenous aquatic vascular plants in southern New England: a historical perspective. *Biological Invasions* 1:281-300.
- <sup>14</sup> Delisle, F., C. Lavoie, M. Jean and D. Lachance. 2003. Reconstructing the spread of invasive plants: taking into account biases associated with herbarium specimens. *Journal of Biogeography* 30:1033-1042.
- <sup>15</sup> Fewless, G. University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: [http://www.uwgb.edu/BIODIVERSITY/herbarium/invasive\\_species/butumb\\_aspect01.jpg](http://www.uwgb.edu/BIODIVERSITY/herbarium/invasive_species/butumb_aspect01.jpg)
- <sup>16</sup> Judziewicz, E. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. 2007. Family Butomaceae. Retrieved December 21, 2010 from: <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=BUTUMB>