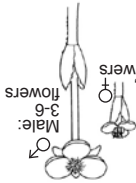


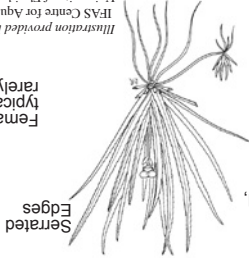
## General Characteristics

- Forms dense mats of vegetation at the surface of the water
- Bright green leaves, up to 16 inches (40 cm), with serrated leaf edges
- Submerged aquatic plant (rises to surface, becoming emergent during spring & summer)

Illustration provided by:  
IFAS Centre for Aquatic Plants,  
University of Florida, Gainesville, 1990



Flower: 3 rounded white petals with yellow centre



SEMI-EMERGENT:  
leaves are thick, rigid,  
usually < 16 inches  
(40 cm) long

SUBMERGED:  
leaves are thin,  
flaccid, brittle,  
usually ≤ 24 inches  
(60 cm)

# Water Soldier WATCH



Photo Credit: OFAH

Photo Credit: Wikipedia Commons

## *Water Soldier*

Water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) is a perennial, submersed aquatic invasive plant (semi-emergent in spring and summer) that forms dense mats of floating vegetation. These dense mats of vegetation can hinder recreational activities, such as boating, fishing and swimming. The plant has serrated edges on its leaves that are very sharp and can cut swimmers or people who come in contact with the plant. Water soldier also outcompetes native aquatic plants.

Water soldier is native to Europe and southwest Asia. Water soldier was first discovered in the Trent Severn Waterway near the hamlet of Trent River, Ontario in 2008, and is the only known wild population in North America. Water soldier is used in North America as an ornamental plant for water gardens. The Trent River population may have resulted from the disposal of water garden plants into the river. Water soldier reproduces through seed and vegetative propagation whereby mature plants produce offsets which can be carried downstream by water currents. It can be introduced to new waters by clinging to recreational watercraft, motors, trailers and fishing gear. Eradication efforts are ongoing in the Trent River. Your help detecting and reporting new infestations is vital to prevent the spread of water soldier and other invasive plants.

## *What you can do*

- **Learn** to identify water soldier (see back cover)
- **Inspect** and remove aquatic plants and animals from boat, motor and trailer
- **Drain** lake or river water from livewell and bilge before leaving access
- **Dispose** of unwanted plants in the trash
- **Rinse** boat and equipment with high-pressure (250 psi) water OR hot water (50°C/122°F), OR **dry** everything for at least 5 days
- **Report** new sightings – note the exact location; wrap a specimen in wet paper towel, place in a sealed plastic bag; or take a clear photograph; and call the OFAH/MNR *Invading Species Hotline*, 1-800-563-7711.

