

Carolina Fanwort

Cabomba caroliniana



What is it and Why is it a Problem?

Carolina Fanwort is a rooted submerged plant that forms thick mats in shallow waters (less than 3 m deep) of lakes, ponds and slow-moving rivers. It is concentrated in Kashiabog Lake and the Crowe River Watershed where it blocks sunlight for native submerged plants, disrupts fish habitat and clogs waterways. It also interferes with recreational activities such as swimming, fishing and boating. It is important to note that this plant prefers acidic waters and thus could establish well in the Canadian Shield if spread there.



How Can it be Managed?

- Report sightings of any invasive species online through [EDDMapS Ontario](#), a web-based mapping system which also has an app, or through the [Invasive Species in Ontario](#) project on [iNaturalist.org](#).
- Learn how to identify it so you can avoid accidentally spreading it with your fishing gear and equipment. Inspect your boat, trailer and fishing gear before leaving a fishing spot and before heading to a new fishing spot to remove any mud and plant fragments. Refer to the [OMNRF's Boater's Action Plan](#) for more information on cleaning your boat and gear.
- Avoid boating near known Carolina Fanwort infestations and reduce your speed. Propellers can cut off pieces of the plant and spread them to new areas.
- If you are considering removing any invasive aquatic plants, ensure you follow [OMNRF's rules](#) regarding removal - the beds of most water bodies in Ontario are Crown Land.

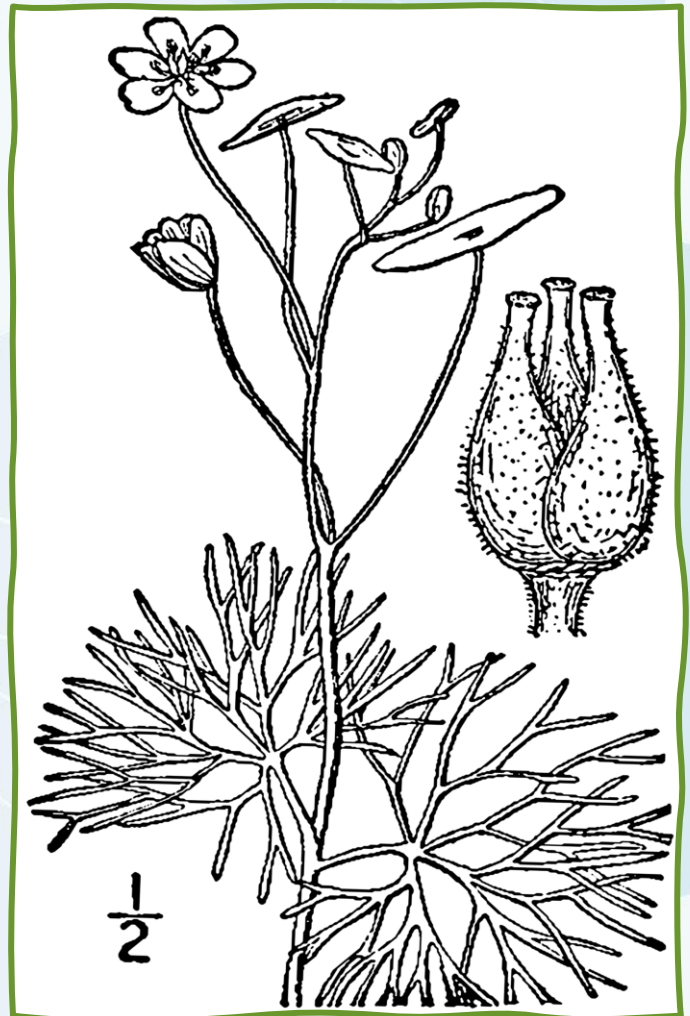


What Does it Look Like?

- Leaves under the water are finely divided, fan-shaped and arranged opposite on the stem (looks feathery)
- Floating leaves are small, oblong and up to 3 cm long
- Flowers are 0.6 - 1.5 cm wide, white - pale yellow (sometimes with a purple or pink hue) and appear in late spring to early fall above the water
- Stems are green-reddish with white or reddish-brown hairs



- Do not buy, sell or plant Carolina Fanwort for water garden or pond use. Carolina Fanwort can look similar to native Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*), White-water Crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis*), Northern Water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum sibiricum*), Water Marigold (*Megalodonta beckii*) and Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) but Fanwort can be differentiated from these because it has opposite, finely divided, fan-shaped leaves. Ensure you know the difference between the native look-alikes and non-native Carolina Fanwort, and only plant native plants in your garden. You can refer to the [Grow me instead: Guide to Planting Native Plants in Southern Ontario](#) to determine what native aquatic plants to use instead. Oftentimes invasive aquatic plants end up reaching water bodies when people dispose of their unwanted aquarium or water garden plants. The correct way to dispose of unwanted aquatic plants is to donate them or throw them in the garbage. They can also be composted or mulched 30 m or more away from a watercourse on land.



References

[Great Lakes Nonindigenous Species Information System](#), produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Invasive Aquatic Plant Species: A Quick Reference Guide](#), produced by Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program and Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

[Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program](#), developed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH).