



# Flowering Rush

*Butomus umbellatus*

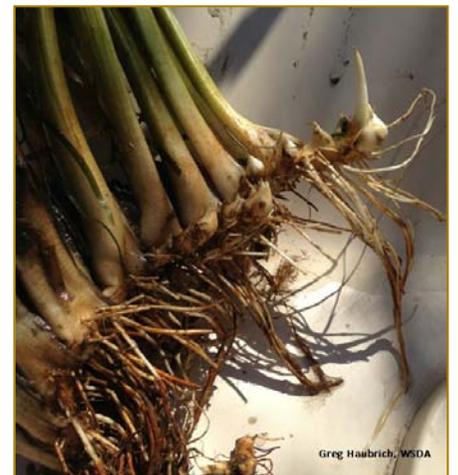


- ✦ Other names: Grass Rush, Water Gladiolus
- ✦ *Butomus umbellatus* is a Class A Noxious Weed
- ✦ An emergent, aquatic perennial, Flowering Rush is the sole species of the Butomaceae plant family. It spreads by bulbils and rhizome fragments, and some plants produce seeds.
- ✦ Plants grow from 1 to 5 feet tall, on cylindrical stalks topped by umbrella shaped flower clusters. Flowers have 3 large pink petals and 3 sepals and bloom from June to August. Its sword-like leaves grow from stout rhizomes, and may be submerged, floating or emerge from water. In addition to rhizomes and rhizome fragments, it reproduces by forming vegetative bulbils (little pea-sized bulb like sprouts) on the rhizomes and at the base of the flower stalk. Some, but not all, plants reproduce by seeds.

- ✦ Flowering Rush is found in freshwater habitats. It requires wet soil and sun and does not grow well in shaded areas. It roots in the mud along lake shores, slow moving rivers, irrigation ditches, and wetlands. It typically grows in shallow waters, but can survive in water up to 9 feet. It was introduced to eastern North America from Eurasia in the late 1800's and can now be found in on both sides of the US and Canadian border. The first recorded infestation in western North America was in 1949, along the banks of the Snake River near Idaho Falls.
- ✦ Seeds and plant fragments are dispersed primarily by wind and water, but may also be spread by waterfowl, wildlife. Boaters can transport Flowering Rush on their equipment.
- ✦ It competes with native wetland and shoreline species and can crowd out desirable vegetation and is an invasive and aggressive colonizer.

## CONTROL OPTIONS

- ✦ Flowering Rush is difficult to control and research continues on control options.
- ✦ As always, the best control is prevention. Flowering rush is sometimes sold for water gardens, so be careful to select a non-invasive alternative when choosing plants.



Greg Haubrich, WSDA



- ✦ Install water gardens a safe distance away from surrounding water bodies to be sure that water gardens are not allowed to overflow into wetlands, streams or rivers.
- ✦ Hand digging or suction dredging by hand, before seed set, may be a control option for small isolated infestations or individual plants. Be careful to remove all root fragments, taking care to disturb the soil around the plant roots as little as possible, as this will spread the rhizome bulbils. Repeated digging will be required. Remove and dispose of all plant and rhizome fragments away from water.
- ✦ Since Flowering Rush is found in aquatic areas, the use of an herbicide formulated for aquatic settings is required. **Please note that aquatic herbicides are restricted for use in Washington State to licensed applicators only.**

