

You Can Help!

If you think you see invasive Water Chestnut in the lake, please let us know by:

- Marking on the flip side of this flyer, the approx. location on the map with an X
- If spotted in multiple locations, simply use multiple Xs
- **DO NOT try to remove it yourself – proper removal and disposal is critical**
- Place this flyer in the drop box provided

Trapa Natans (Water Chestnut)

Identification/Habitat

Water chestnut is a rooted, floating plant that invades shallow to deep, fresh water habitats in the northeastern United States. Water chestnut can grow in 12 to 15 feet of water and forms dense floating mats, often three layers deep. Leaves on the surface of the water are alternate, triangular in shape, strongly toothed and connected to the stem by an inflated petiole. Submerged leaves are feathery and either opposite or alternate. The spines of dried seed pods can penetrate shoes.



Dispersal

The seed pods drift in the water and lodge themselves in areas that produce a plant after two years. In addition to this, a plant dislodged from its seed can grow down and begin to produce a new seed. This aggressive species is a prolific reproducer. 1 acre of water chestnut can produce enough seeds to cover 100 acres the following year. Water chestnut seeds can remain viable in sediments for up to 12 years. Seed pods found floating may be removed but must be disposed of far from water bodies; preferably burned.

Problems

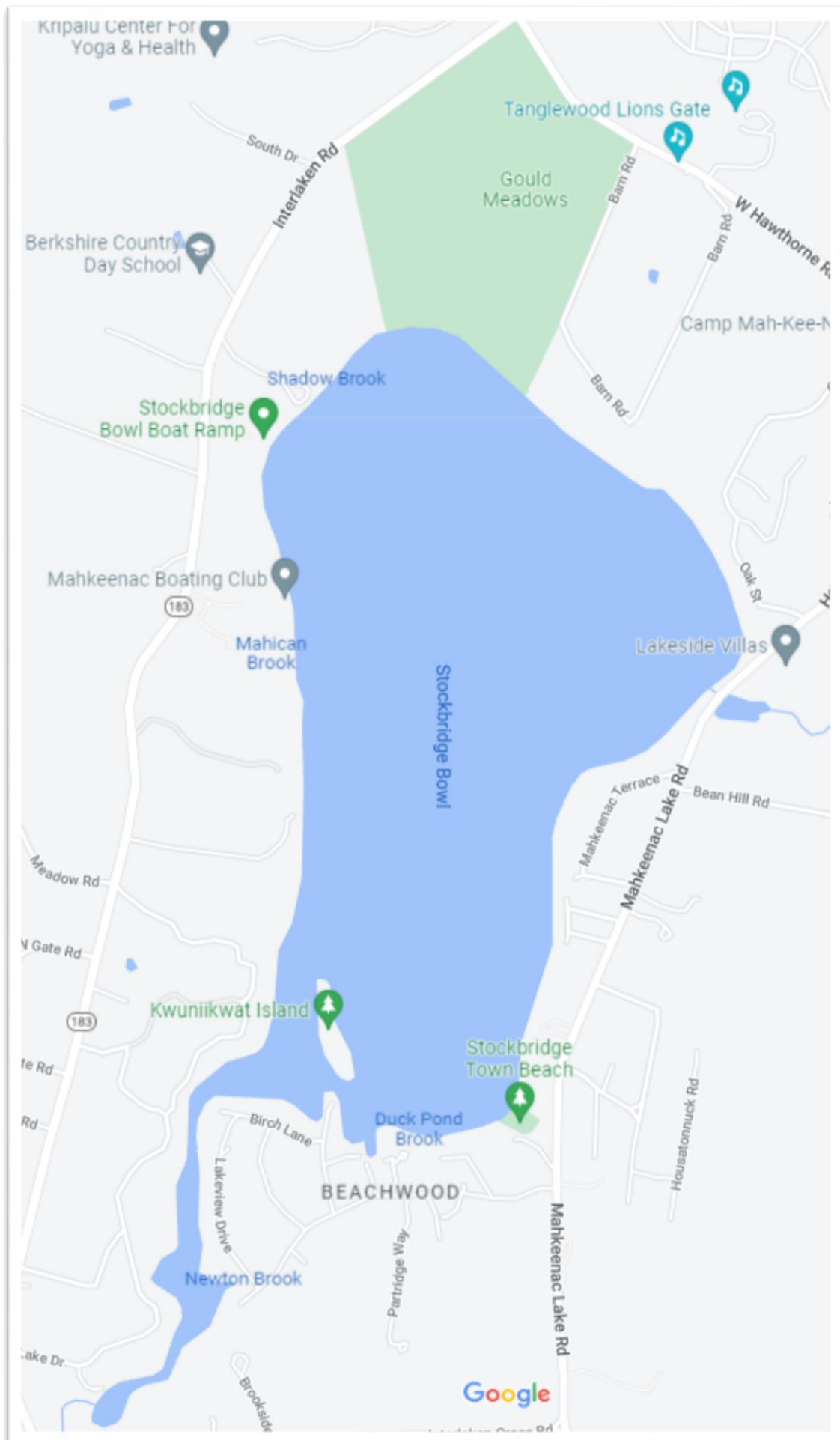
The dense, floating mats restrict light availability, reduce the oxygen content, and heat the water when decaying, thus displacing other emergent and floating vegetation and impairing fish survival. Water chestnut also limits boating, fishing, swimming, and other recreational activities. The water chestnut destroys native plant life essential for waterfowl and fish. Sanitary problems can arise because of the fact that the thick beds collect and hold quantities of organic waste, thus creating water pollution hazards, where swarms of mosquitoes can breed prolifically among the plants.

THANK YOU!

The Stockbridge Bowl Stewardship Commission



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WATER CHESTNUT IDENTIFICATION

REPORT IT, DO NOT REMOVE IT!

PROPER REMOVAL & DISPOSAL IS IMPORTANT

How do I identify water chestnut?

Water chestnut is an annual plant with a submerged stem 12-15 feet long with fine roots that anchor it to the soil. Its floating leaves are triangular with saw-toothed edges and hollow, air-filled stems. Leaves form a rosette around a central point.



How do I identify water chestnut?

Its four petaled, white flowers bloom in June. The fruits are hard nuts with four-inch barbed spines. Seeds within these fruits can remain viable for up to 12 years.

How It Spreads

Water chestnut spreads by rosette and fruits detaching from the stem and floating to another area. They also spread by clinging to floating objects including recreational watercraft, the pads of boat trailers, and fishing equipment.

