

“Water Chestnut Management Activities: 2010”

A survey of Lake Assunpink was conducted in June to assess the status of water chestnut, an invasive, non-native plant species. This 225 acre lake is located in Monmouth County within Fish & Wildlife’s Assunpink WMA. It is a popular warmwater fishing destination and is regulated as a Lunker Bass lake.

Unfortunately water chestnut has become well-established, particularly in the uppermost (westerly) end of the lake where dense mats have formed in the shallows. This dense growth can effectively choke the area, making boating and fishing nearly impossible. The upper half of the lake outside of this infested area has scattered patches of water chestnut along the shoreline which are occasionally interspersed with yellow water lily and watershield (smaller lily pads).

Early detection is the key to water chestnut control since smaller populations are easier to eliminate than larger ones. It also costs less to control a small infestation because plants can be individually hand-pulled. A large population requires the use of mechanical harvesters or application of aquatic herbicides to achieve control. It will be difficult and costly to eradicate water chestnut from Lake Assunpink given this plant’s hardiness (seed pods remain viable for 10+ years) and abundance.”