

***Hottonia inflata* Ell.**
Featherfoil



Family: Primulaceae

Synonyms: None.

Description: Winter annual. Leafy rosettes submersed but floating to surface of pond before flowering period. Stems to 5 dm, inflated, and contracted at the nodes. Highly dissected submersed leaves clustered at the base of flowering stems and scattered along rooting/floating vegetative stems. Flowers white, pedicilate, subtended by foliaceous bracts and occur in whorls at the nodes of flowering stems. The fruit is a many-seeded capsule.

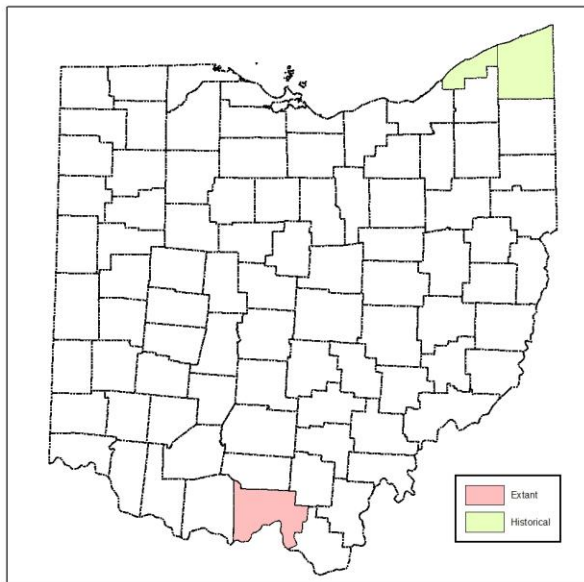
Flowering: May – June

Fruiting: May – July

Similar Species: The distinctive inflated flower stalks, highly dissected leaves, and floating habit distinguish *Hottonia inflata* from other aquatic herbaceous species. It's not likely to be confused with any other plant in our flora.

Total Range: AL, AR, CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MO, MS, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA & WV.

Ohio Range: Post 1990 record: Scioto. Historical records from Ashtabula and Lake counties.



Ohio Status:

<http://naturepreserves.ohiodnr.gov/rareplants>

Habitats: Quiet, shallow water of ponds, streams, and ditches or occasionally in wet soil.

Threats: Primary threats include wetland drainage, hydrological alterations, water quality degradation, and/or invasive species.

Conservation Potential: Unknown, but perhaps difficult to establish due to its winter annual habit and fickle blooming period.

Inventory guidelines: This species, when in flower, is unlikely to be misidentified. Avoid

over-collecting due to its annual reseeding habit.

Comments: The habitat for this species has largely been destroyed or altered in Ohio. Its state range may be accurately known. The plant is so distinctive it would be difficult to overlook. It should be sought throughout the Ohio River Valley. It was rediscovered at its sole Scioto Co. site in May 2017 after an absence of over 30 years. Featherfoil is highly ephemeral and only easily discovered when in flower with plants quickly decaying once done blooming. Additionally, it does not germinate/flower with consistency and can remain dormant for long periods, as well as be highly variable in numbers of plants in any given blooming year. This makes surveying and tracking this species difficult. Featherfoil is rare throughout its range and ranked as G4 – apparently secure.

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