

Floating Pennywort Control

Advisory Note

March 2017

Floating pennywort is a non-native invasive plant to the UK, which can grow very rapidly and form large rafts of vegetation. Please refer to the attached leaflet produced by the GB Non-Native Secretariat, which provides identification information.

Control Methods

Floating pennywort can grow from very small fragments (fingernail size) therefore it is important not to break the plant whilst controlling it or it increases the risk of spreading it further.

There are several control methods; mechanical, hand pulling or herbicide spray which can be used alone or in combination with each other depending on the individual circumstances.

- **Mechanical Control** – is used predominantly for tackling larger infestations of floating pennywort. This method can break the floating pennywort into small fragments so a boom and stop net should be used to catch any fragments. These should then be removed with a hand net.
- **Hand Pulling** – is used for small areas of growth of floating pennywort, making sure that the plant is gently removed with the root.
- **Herbicide Application** - can be successful for small rafts of floating pennywort if used at the correct time of year. Permission is required from the Environment Agency to use herbicide in or near water and the applicant must be suitably qualified.

Disposal Methods

To dispose of floating pennywort, compost on site away from wet areas and then either leave to rot down or burn once dry enough. Please ensure that you have permission to leave the removed material on the site.

Preventing Establishment in New Locations

Options to prevent floating pennywort from becoming established on lakes/watercourses include:

- Ensuring biosecurity measures are in place and implemented, for example Check-Clean-Dry, to avoid the transfer of any non-native invasive species.
- Regularly checking the site including connected watercourses for floating pennywort and if found designing an appropriate control programme to control it before it becomes widely established.
- Considering the use of a floating boom across any inlets to prevent floating pennywort entering the water body. Only use this technique where it will not cause other impacts such as increasing flood risk. The watercourse should still be regularly checked for floating pennywort.

Control and Prevention Activities

Any work undertaken should have landowner permission. Anyone undertaking floating pennywort control should carry out a health and safety risk assessment and implement the necessary measures before commencing work. Remember that you will need the relevant permissions and certification to undertake herbicide control.

Reporting Floating Pennywort

If you think you have found floating pennywort please report it to anglian-invasive@environment-agency.gov.uk providing a photograph and detail of the location, preferably including a grid reference.

Floating Pennywort

Species Description

Scientific name: *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*
AKA: Dail-ceiniog arnofiol (Welsh), *Hydrocotyle nova zealandiae*

Native to: North America

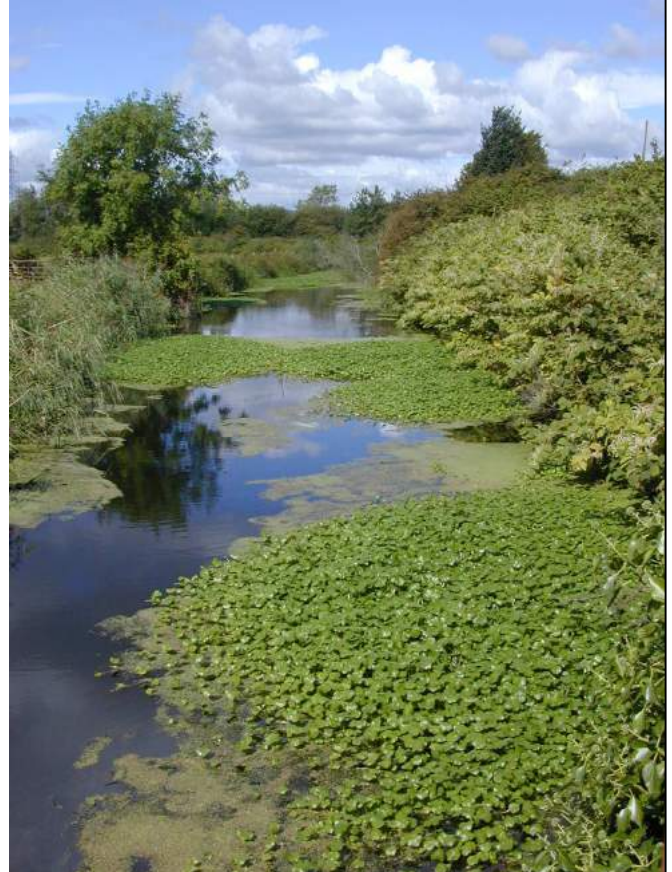
Habitat: Emergent or floating on the surface of still or slowly moving freshwater

Free-floating or rooted. The characteristic leaves and growth form help to make this plant easy to identify. It is found mostly in the south-east of England and occasionally in the north-west of England and Wales. Spreading rapidly.

First naturalised in 1990 as a result of discarded plants from garden ponds. Can grow up to 20cm per day and may quickly dominate a waterbody forming thick mats and impeding water flow and amenity use. May out-compete native species by blocking out light, causing deoxygenation, obstructing air breathing insects from reaching the water surface and reducing water temperatures.

Floating pennywort is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England, Wales and Scotland. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause this species to grow in the wild.

For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



Key ID Features

Grows horizontally



Shiny, kidney-shaped leaves with crinkled edge, frequently broader than long

Identification throughout the year

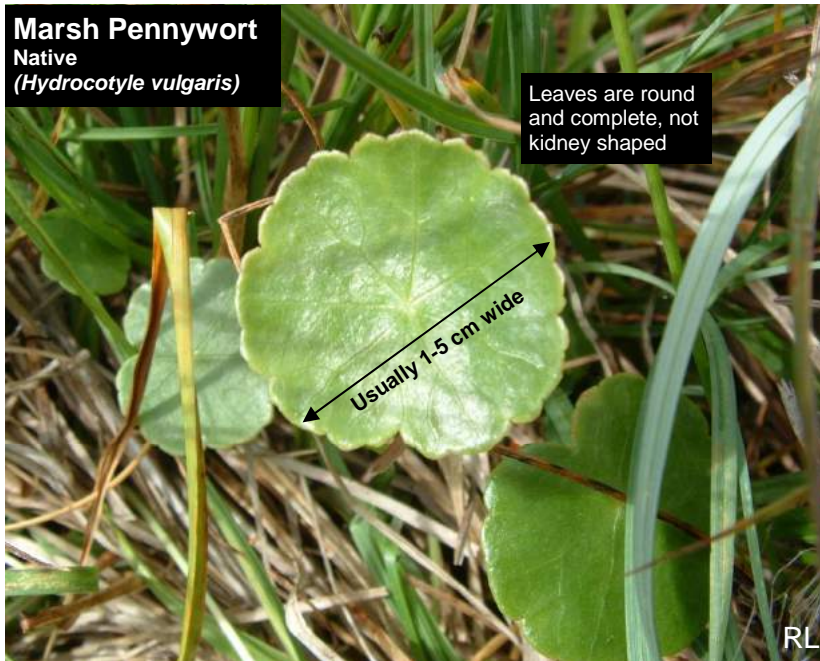
Varies little throughout the year, although in the winter it is most likely to be found at the water's edge. Tiny white flowers are rare, but if present, they appear between July and August.

Distribution

Common in the south-east of England, and spreading to other parts of the British Isles.

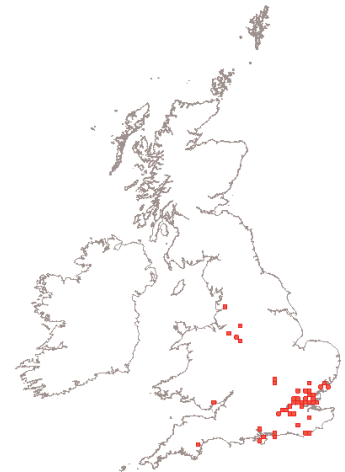
Similar Species

Marsh Pennywort Native (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*)



Grows on damp ground in bogs and fens. Always rooted in the ground, never free-floating

Source: NBN Gateway. Check website for current distribution

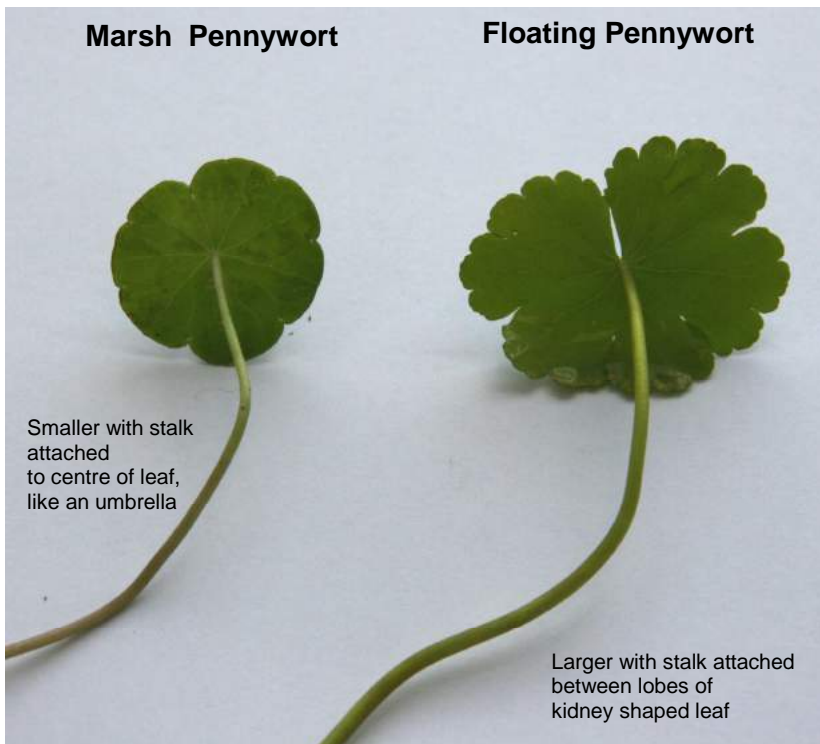


Floating Pennywort can form dense mats that need to be physically removed



Marsh Pennywort

Floating Pennywort



Smaller with stalk attached to centre of leaf, like an umbrella

Larger with stalk attached between lobes of kidney shaped leaf

References and further reading:

Blamey, M, Fitter, R and Fitter, A (2003) "*The Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland. The Complete Guide to the British and Irish Flora.*" A & C Black

Preston, C D and Croft, J M (1997) "*Aquatic plants in Britain and Ireland.*" Harley Books

Preston, C D, Pearman D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) "*New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora.*" Oxford University Press

Stace, C (1999) "*Field Flora of the British Isles.*" Cambridge University Press