

Salvinia molesta

Giant Salvinia,
Kariba weed

Invasive to Maine

Freshwater
Ponds and Lakes

Leaves



Tim Waters



Look for leaves that are small (2cm), round, and arranged in groups of threes. The upper surfaces of green leaves are covered with rows of white, bristly hairs. Leaves are fleshy. Plants bear a third leaf that is brown and dangles underwater.

PLANT COMMUNITY	LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF SHAPE	LEAF EDGE
 EMERGENT	 OPPOSITE	 TRIANGULAR	 FEATHER DIVIDED
 FLOATING LEAF	 ONE LEAF PER STEM	 HEART	 TOOTHED
 SUBMERSED	 2+ LEAVES PER STEM	 OVAL	 SMOOTH

Plant



www.ecohusky.uconn.edu/images/GiantSalviniaTN



Look for a floating fern with fleshy leaves that has no roots.

Stem



Victor Ramey, University of Florida



Look for stems that are up to 10cm. Stems are rootless, hairy, and float horizontally just below the surface of the water. At each node there is a new pair of floating leaves.

Seasonal Change



Tim Waters



Giant salvinia is a fern, so it does not produce a flower. It reproduces each year with spores and by fragmentation.

Similar Species

No native plants in Maine are similar to Giant salvinia.

Did You Know?

In the laboratory, plant populations have been found to double in size every 2 to 4 days. Giant salvinia originated in Brazil and was introduced in the US as a decorative plant for aquariums. Salvinia weevils are used as a biological control of Giant salvinia.

If you think you found this species, call Maine's Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program: 207-783-7733 OR Department of Environmental Protection: 1-800-452-1942