

Reporting Aquatic and Wetland Invasive Species

Staff, partners, and volunteers monitor for invasive species during targeted invasive species surveys and routine water quality monitoring. When new populations of invasive species are observed, they will be reported to Invasive.Species@wisconsin.gov and documented in SWIMS by completing the appropriate field data sheet. If species are observed incidentally, an incident report will be entered in SWIMS. Following verification, DNR will create a SWIMS records called a Resource of Interest (ROI). This record will populate lists and maps on DNR websites.

Observations of NR 40 Prohibited species must be reported to DNR immediately.

Photographing

All new detections must be [reported](#) to the [Regional DNR AIS Coordinator](#) for verification. Photographs and location should be sent to Invasive.Species@wisconsin.gov. Physical specimens are needed for all new NR 40 prohibited species populations and must be immediately submitted to the [Regional DNR AIS Coordinator](#). The Regional DNR AIS Coordinator will request specimens, if needed.

It is essential that photographs are collected in a way that enables accurate identification. Poor photographic technique may result in unidentifiable records. This document provides guidance on how to collect and submit photographs for verification and documentation.

Equipment

- Aquatic Invasive Species Early Detection Target Species document
- Aquatic Invasive Species Identification Guide
- Camera: High-resolution is preferred, though other types may suffice (e.g. camera phone)
- Field datasheet (i.e. AIS Early Detection Form or Invasive Species Incident Report Form)

Methods

1. Become familiar with the Aquatic Invasive Species [target species](#) and [identification guide](#).
2. Take a picture of the landscape illustrating the location and extent of the occurrence so that the site is easy to recognize for follow-up visits. Include landmarks such as signs, beaches, parks, public structures (i.e. docks, boat landings, buildings, etc.) memorable environmental features (i.e. large trees, boulders, abrupt changes in vegetative cover, etc.), or anything else that is fairly unique and would be easy to locate again. Include the data sheet in the photo so that it is clear where the photo was taken. Do not take pictures of private property! The geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) will allow us to relocate the population.

Common issues when taking a landscape photo include poor photo quality (i.e. lighting, focus), bad placement, and incomplete/missing datasheet. Take multiple photos to ensure that at least one is in focus.

These protocols will undergo internal DNR review in fall/winter 2021 & external review in winter/spring 2022. If you have major comments, please contact maureen.ferry@wisconsin.gov.



Figure 1 Landscape photo of yellow iris population near a beach. Good photo, but datasheet is missing.



Figure 2 Landscape photo of monitoring site with incomplete datasheet. No invasive population in photo.

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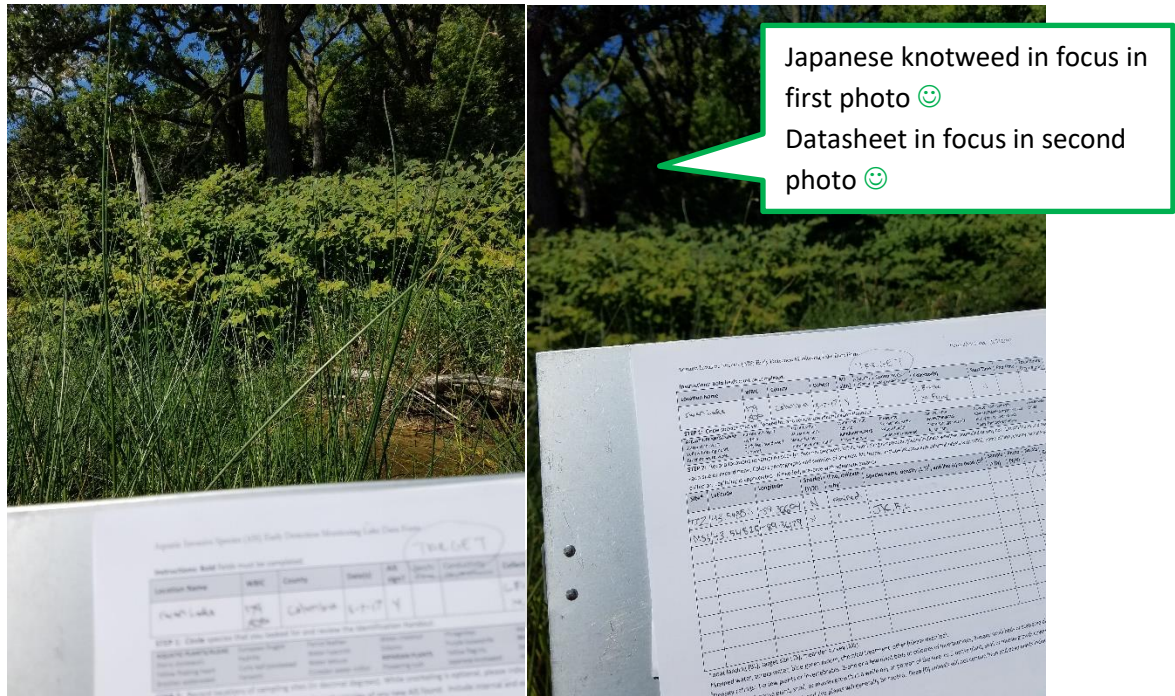


Figure 3 Two landscape photos of monitoring site – one photo with plant in focus and one photo with complete datasheet in focus.

3. Take several close-up pictures of the specimen to show the various identifying characteristics. Use the Aquatic Invasive Species Identification guide for reference of which characteristics to capture in photos (see yellow highlights in the Aquatic Invasive Species Identification guide). Include the field datasheet in each picture to show the location (i.e. site name, lat long, date, etc.) – it is okay if only a part of the field datasheet is included. Keep the datasheet and subject at a similar distance from the camera to ensure that both are in focus. Take multiple photos to ensure that at least one is in focus. If there are multiple populations of a species in one lake, stream or wetland station, only one representative photo is needed.

Common issues include poor photo quality (i.e. lighting, focus), bad placement, and incomplete datasheet.

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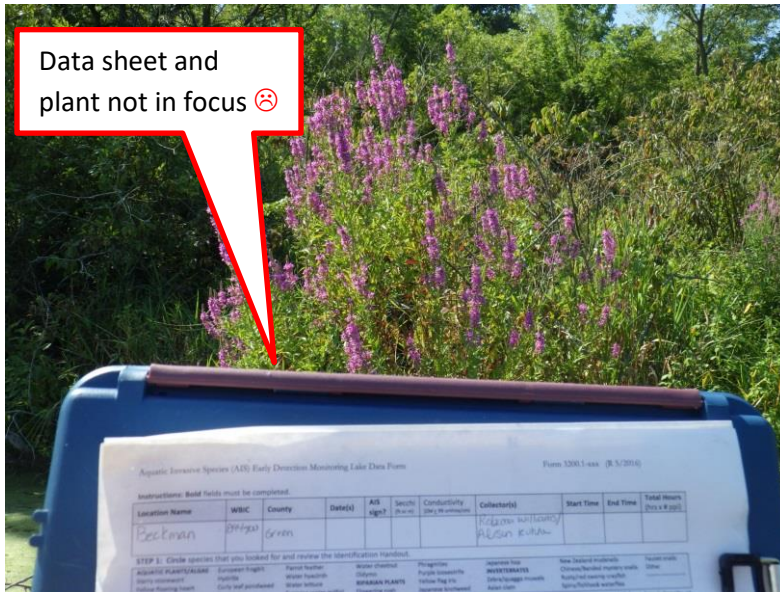


Figure 4 Purple loosestrife plant that does not clearly show identifying characteristics and the datasheet is incomplete and out of focus. Photographer should have been closer to the plant to better show characteristics and help keep both plant and datasheet in.

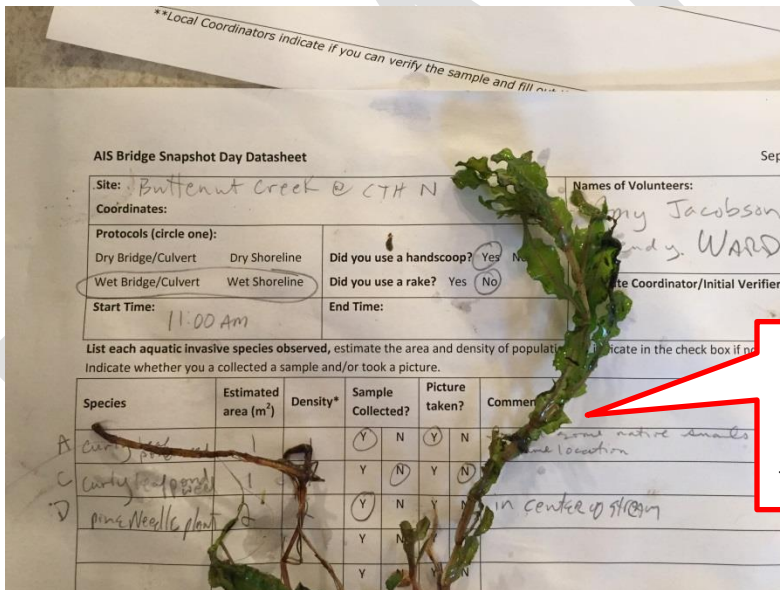


Figure 5 Curly leaf pondweed is in focus and data sheet is mostly complete, but missing coordinates.

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Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Early Detection Monitoring Data Form

Instructions: Bold fields must be completed.

Location Name	WBIC	County	Date(s)	AIS sign?	Secchi (ft or m)	Activity (sp/100m)	Collector(s)	Star
Example Lake	123123	Portage	6/1/15	Y			Paul Skowit Maureen F.	

STEP 1: Circle species that you looked for and review the Identification Handbook.

AQUATIC PLANTS/ALGAE	Water hyacinth	Water chestnut	RIPARIAN PLANTS	INVERTEBRATES
Hydrilla	Water lettuce	Flowering rush	Japanese knotweed	Zebra/quagga mussel
European frogbit	Eurasian water milfoil	Phragmites	Japanese hop	Asian clam
Yellow floating heart	Fanwort	Didymo		New Zealand mud snail
Brazilian waterweed	Parrot feather			

STEP 2: Record locations of sampling sites (in decimal degrees). Indicate whether snorkeled or why not. List AIS found. List date, WBIC, name of lake, county, sample date, sample type (snails, spiny water flea or zebra mussel) and collector. Region, date, and time. Preserve in 70% ethanol.

Site*	Latitude	Longitude	Snorkel (Y/N)	If no, indicate why†	Species name, density (1-5)‡, and live (L) or dead (D)§
BL	44.XXXX	89.XXXX	Y		Asian clam (<i>Corbicula</i>), 1, L

Data sheet complete and legible 😊
Asian clam in focus and with ID characteristics 😊

Figure 6 Asian clam on completed datasheet showing clam size and characteristic ridges. Data sheet is complete.

Data Management

1. Observer will enter a fieldwork event/incident report into SWIMS.
2. Name the photo with:

SPSCODE_ COUNTY_YYYYMMDD_ WATERBODY NAME_(WBIC or STATIONID or LATITUDE_LONGITUDE)_ COLLECTOR NAME

Ex: ZM_ Dane_20160805_ Lake Delton_1295200_ Graham

3. Observer will send the photo with a scan of the data sheet to Invasive.Species@wisconsin.gov.
4. Photos will be used for verification.
5. Following verification, DNR staff will create a ROI for new occurrences and assign a status based on the verifier results.
6. This ROI will populate the [lists](#) and [maps](#) on the website.

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