

FIG BUTTERCUP

*a confirmed threat**

COMMON NAME: Fig Buttercup or Lesser Celandine
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Ficaria verna* (formerly *Ranunculus ficaria*)

If you suspect that you have or have found Fig Buttercup, please contact the Clemson University Department of Plant Industry

at [864.646.2140](tel:864.646.2140) or www.clemson.edu/regulatory/contact/

or contact your local Clemson University Extension Service office.

In addition, please email FigButtercup@scnps.org

An early-blooming perennial with origins in Europe and northern Africa, Fig Buttercup represents a serious threat to riparian zones throughout the southeastern US. It thrives in moist environments and is typically found adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes and ponds downstream of landscape plantings or compost piles, and in wetlands.

Fig Buttercup makes numerous tubers and bulblets that are easily dislodged and dispersed by mowing, water events and well-meaning weed-pullers. All of these can grow into new plants.

Its emergence in winter before most native species gives it a great competitive advantage. Once established, it creates extensive dense monocultural mats which displace and exclude all native vegetation. Because of its accelerated growth cycle, it can be spotted or treated during only a short window of time (roughly Feb-April). Above-ground portions are mostly gone by late May or early June.

****Ficaria verna* is now a regulated pest plant species in South Carolina.**

Leaves: Fleshy, glabrous, shiny dark green leaves vary from cordate to oblong; leaf margins can be entire or crenate; petioles have dilated, sheathing bases. Stem leaves are smaller than basal leaves.

Flowers: Yellow flowers with a slightly darker center, with 3 (rarely 4) pouch-like sepals and typically with 8 petals (but that number varies from 7 to 26 or more). Flowers borne singly on pedicels.

Family: Ranunculaceae.

Similar Species: Often confused with Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), which does not form extensive continuous mats of vegetation or produce underground tubers or axillary bulblets. *Caltha*'s flowers are comprised of 5-9 yellow sepals (no petals).

Control: The treatment window is short. Very small infestations can be controlled by hand-digging, if care is taken to remove and properly dispose of *all* of the many bulblets and tubers. It is recommended that larger infestations be treated with a wetland-approved systemic herbicide (such as Rodeo® at 1.5% with a 0.5% non-ionic surfactant), starting as soon as plants emerge in late winter. Herbicide applications late in the flowering period are less effective and more likely to negatively impact native plants and amphibians. More than one year of treatment will likely be necessary.

To learn more, watch this video: <http://scnps.org/education/citizen-science-invasive-fig-buttercup/>



Root system includes numerous fingerlike or fig-shaped tubers, each of which can produce a new plant.



Netted venation on leaf undersides can be so prominent as to appear almost "reptilian", as shown above.

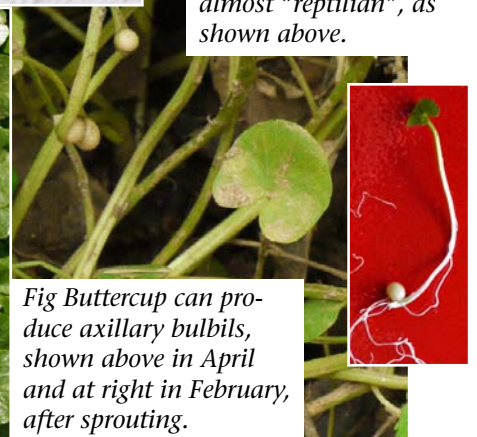


Fig Buttercup can produce axillary bulblets, shown above in April and at right in February, after sprouting.