

Hydrilla verticillata

Invasive to Maine

Hydrilla,
Florida Elodea, Oxygen Weed

Freshwater
Ponds, Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

Leaves



Vic Ramey, University of Florida

PERMITTED USE

Look for small leaves 5 to 20 mm long that look like knife blades with finely-toothed edges. Leaves are arranged in whorls (see leaf chart). Whorls near the top of the stem have 4 to 8 leaves but whorls do not always form at the bottom.

| PLANT COMMUNITY | LEAF ARRANGEMENT | LEAF SHAPE | LEAF EDGE |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| EMERGENT | ALTERNATE | ELLIPTICAL | FEATHER DIVIDED |
| FLOATING LEAF | OPPOSITE | BLADE | TOOTHED |
| SUBMERSED | WHORLED | OVAL | SMOOTH |

Plant



Ann Murray, University of Florida

PERMITTED USE

Look for a plant growing completely underwater with lots of branches. Hydrilla is found in both shallow and deep water.

Stem



urtica, www.flickr.com

CC BY-NC-SA

Look for stems that grow up to 3 m long. Long stems grow toward the water surface where the stems branch and form dense mats.

Seasonal Change



IFAS, Center for Aquatic Plants

PERMITTED USE

In July and August look for flowers that are small and white with 3 petals. They rise above the surface on very thin stems.

www.vitalsignsme.org

Similar Species

Hydrilla can be confused with many of the native waterweeds. All of these species have similar-shaped leaves that form whorls, BUT the native waterweeds have only 3 leaves per whorl. Hydrilla can have up to 8 leaves per whorl.

Fun Fact

Hydrilla can reproduce 4 different ways!: (1) seeds, (2) fragmentation (broken pieces of plant that can make their own plant), (3) storage roots called tubers (like potatoes), and (4) a special bud called a turion that stays alive in winter and in unfavorable conditions.