

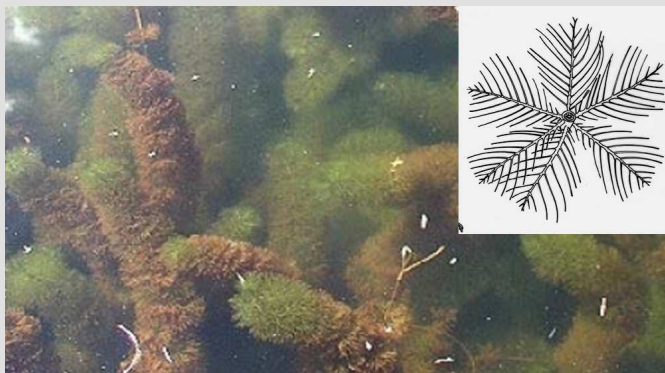
# Myriophyllum heterophyllum

Invasive to Maine

Variable Watermilfoil

Freshwater  
Ponds and Lakes

## Leaves



Leslie J. Mehrhoff UC, www.invasive.org



Look for leaves that look brushlike and have closely-spaced whorls (less than 5 mm apart) of 4 to 6 leaves on the stem. There are 5 to 14 pairs of thread-like leaflets per leaf (see diagram).

PLANT COMMUNITY	LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF SHAPE	LEAF EDGE
 EMERGENT	 ALTERNATE	 ELLIPTICAL	 FEATHER DIVIDED
 FLOATING LEAF	 OPPOSITE	 BLADE	 FORK DIVIDED
 SUBMERSED	 WHORLED	 OVAL	 BRANCH DIVIDED

## Plant



Leslie J. Mehrhoff UC, www.invasive.org



Look for a plant with branches that look like raccoon tails. Variable Watermilfoil grows underwater up to 5 m deep with flower spikes only emerging in July and August.

## Stem



Vic Ramey, University of Florida

PERMITTED USE

Look for stems that are most often thick and reddish in color. They rise from large clusters of roots.

## Seasonal Change



Ann Murray CFAP/Leslie J. Mehrhoff UC



In July and August look for flowers that are tiny and white. They appear in whorls (see chart above) on spikes that rise above the water.

[www.vitalsignsme.org](http://www.vitalsignsme.org)

## Similar Species

Variable Watermilfoil and 2 native species, Farwell's and Low Watermilfoils, have a very small space between the whorls of leaves (less than 5 mm). Variable Watermilfoil always forms whorls and has flowers above the surface. The native species do not always form whorls and have underwater flowers.

## Fun Fact

Variable watermilfoil grows well in all conditions: still and flowing waters, under ice, at depths of 1 to 15 meters, in mud, silt, sand, and gravel. When lakes dry up, it can even change into a land plant and survive until the water comes back.