

Najas minor

European Naiad,
Spiny Leaf Naiad

Invasive to Maine

Freshwater
Ponds and Lakes

Leaves



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, www.bugwood.org, Diagram USDA



Look for small leaves (2 to 3 cm) that are elongate. They are thin, pointed, and have toothed (even spiny) edges. The base of each leaf that wraps around the stem is jagged and square, not round. Leaves can be alternate, opposite, or whorled!

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

Plant



Troy Evans, www.bugwood.org, Diagram USDA



Look for an underwater plant with lots of thin branches and leaves. European Naiad is found growing at depths of 15 cm to 2 m.

Stem



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, www.bugwood.org



Look for stems that are thin and flexible. They grow up to 3 m long and have many branches at the upper end of the stem.

Seasonal Change

Your Photo here!

We hope you don't find this invasive species, but if you do we need a picture of the flowers and stem of the European Naiad for this identification card. Please take a clear photo of the tiny flowers and long thin stem, and send it to vitalsigns@gmri.org

From July to August look for green flowers that are as small as a grain of sand, growing in the crevices between the leaves and stem.

www.vitalsignsme.org

Similar Species

You can tell invasive European Naiad apart from the native Slender Naiad by looking at the base of the leaves (where they attach to the stem). The European Naiad has a jagged, square-shaped leaf base. The Slender Naiad has a smooth rounded leaf base.

Fun Fact

The European Naiads stem is easily broken. Because of its fragile stem it is sometimes called the Brittle Naiad. It has the incredible ability to grow a whole new plant from tiny pieces that have broken off (this is called fragmentation.) These pieces can get caught on boats and travel to new places.