Hydrilla verticillata

Hydrilla,
Florida Elodea, Oxygen Weed

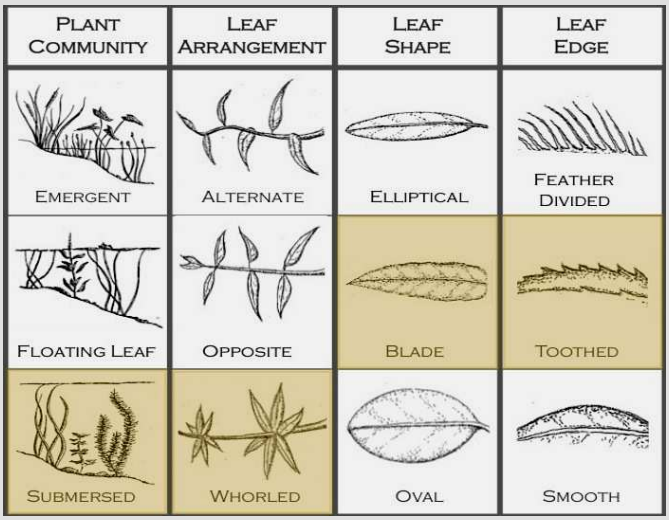
Invasive to Maine

Freshwater
Ponds, Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

Leaves

Karen Hahnel, DEP

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

Karen Hahnel, DEP

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

Stem

Karen Hahnel, DEP

Look for stems that grow up to 3 m long. Long stems grow from underground tubers (pictured above) 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.

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.

Did You Know?

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.

If you think you found this species, call Maine's Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program: 207-783-7733 OR Department of Environmental Protection: 1-800-452-1942

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Help us improve this species card! Contact us with your updates.

Gulf of Maine Research Institute

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