

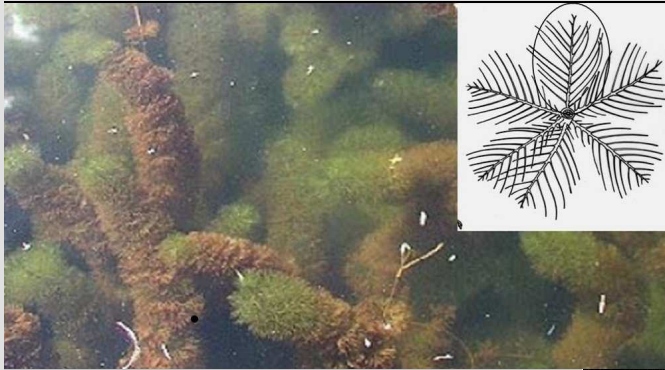
Myriophyllum heterophyllum

Variable Watermilfoil

Invasive to Maine

Freshwater
Ponds and Lakes

Leaves



Leslie J. Mehrhoff UC, www.invasive.org



Look for submerged leaves that are divided like feathers. Each whorl has 4 to 6 feather-divided leaves that are spaced less than 5 mm apart. There are 5 to 14 pairs of thread-like leaflets per leaf (see diagram).

PLANT COMMUNITY	LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF SHAPE	LEAF DIVISION
<p>EMERGENT</p>	<p>ALTERNATE</p>	<p>ELLIPTICAL</p>	<p>FEATHER DIVIDED</p>
<p>FLOATING LEAF</p>	<p>OPPOSITE</p>	<p>BLADE</p>	<p>TOOTHED</p>
<p>SUBMERSED</p>	<p>WHORLED</p>	<p>OVAL</p>	<p>SMOOTH</p>

Plant



Sue Donaldson

PERMITTED USE

Look for plants with submerged leaves that look like raccoon tails. Variable watermilfoil grows underwater up to 5 m deep with flower spikes emerging from June through August.

Stem



Maine DEP

PERMITTED USE

Look for stems that are often thick and reddish in color.

Seasonal Change



Ann Murray CFAP/Leslie J. Mehrhoff UC



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

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.

Did You Know?

Variable watermilfoil grows well in all conditions: still and flowing waters, under ice, at depths of 1 to 5 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.

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

Researched and created by: Brendan O'Keefe

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



www.vitalsignsme.org