

New Hampshire's  
Prohibited **Exotic** Aquatic Plants  
and some  
**Native** Look-Alikes



Milfoil (**Exotic**)



Milfoil (**Native**)

A Project of the New Hampshire Lakes Association

The purpose of this booklet is to assist in the identification of exotic (non-native) aquatic plants so that their introduction into New Hampshire's public waters may be prevented or detected early.

Included, in alphabetical order, are the fourteen prohibited plants (RSA 487:16-a) whose common names appear in **RED**, followed by the word (**Exotic**). These are followed in alphabetical order by seven native aquatic plants including look-alikes, whose names appear in **GREEN** with the word (**Native**).

**Please note:** These are images of actual plants. Plants you see underwater may look different in size (+/-) or color.

As of January 1, 1998, the sale, distribution, importation, purchase, propagation, transportation, or introduction of exotic aquatic weeds in the state of New Hampshire was prohibited (RSA 487:16a). These exotic plants are particularly noxious because they are invasive, which means that they grow rapidly, spread easily, and out-compete native plants, thus impacting the natural ecosystem. Invasive plants compromise the recreational, ecological, and economic value of our public waters.

If you suspect that a plant you find may be one of the fourteen prohibited aquatic plants, please contact the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services at 603/271-2248.

### Acknowledgments

The New Hampshire Lakes Association Inc. gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Rae Tober, creator of this booklet; NH Dept. of Environmental Services Limnology Center; Lake Sunapee Protective Association; and the VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation.

This booklet was produced through a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the NH Lakes Association.

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**LAKES**



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## Brazilian Elodea (Exotic)

*Egeria densa*

Leaves can be stiff or pliable with 3, but usually 4 or more, leaves whorled (circled) around stem

Dense leaves at tip

Brittle stem

Old fragment with roots

Root

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** In dense patches  
**Mode of Infestation:** Fragmentation

# Common Reed (Exotic)

*Phragmites australis*



Sheath  
of  
leaf  
wraps  
around  
stem



Photo by Rae Tober



Dried plume  
silky in  
summer; dark  
in the fall

**Type:** Emergent  
**Scale:** Stem and  
plume 14" or more  
**Grows:** Up to 16 feet  
tall  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Trailing root system  
and seed dispersal



## Curly Leaf Pondweed (Exotic)

*Potamogeton crispus*



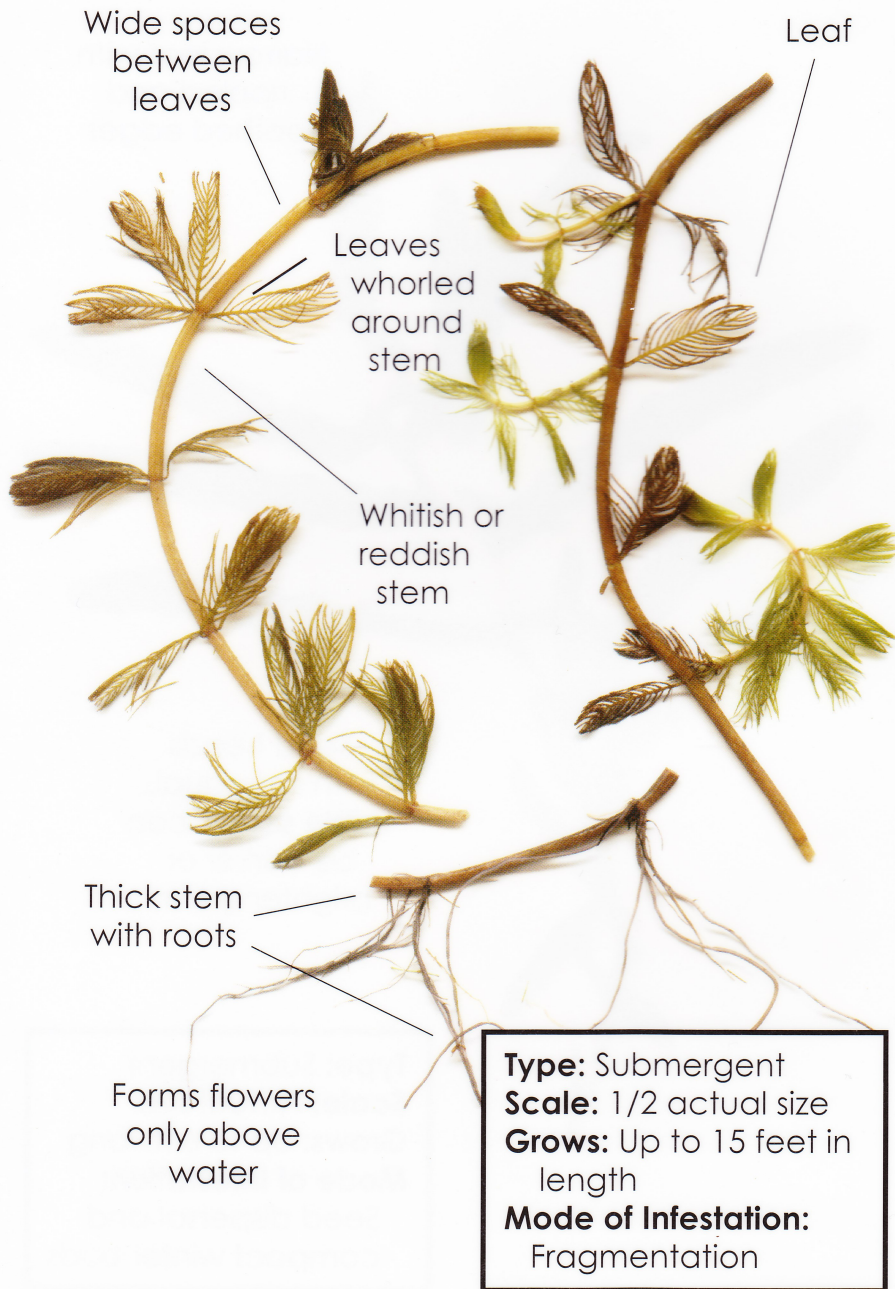
Narrow leaf with  
rippled and  
toothed edges

Seed heads  
with individual,  
visible seeds; can  
be darker or  
brighter green

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 6 ft. long  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Seed dispersal and  
compact winter buds

# Eurasian Milfoil (Exotic)

*Myriophyllum spicatum*





## European Frogbit (Exotic)

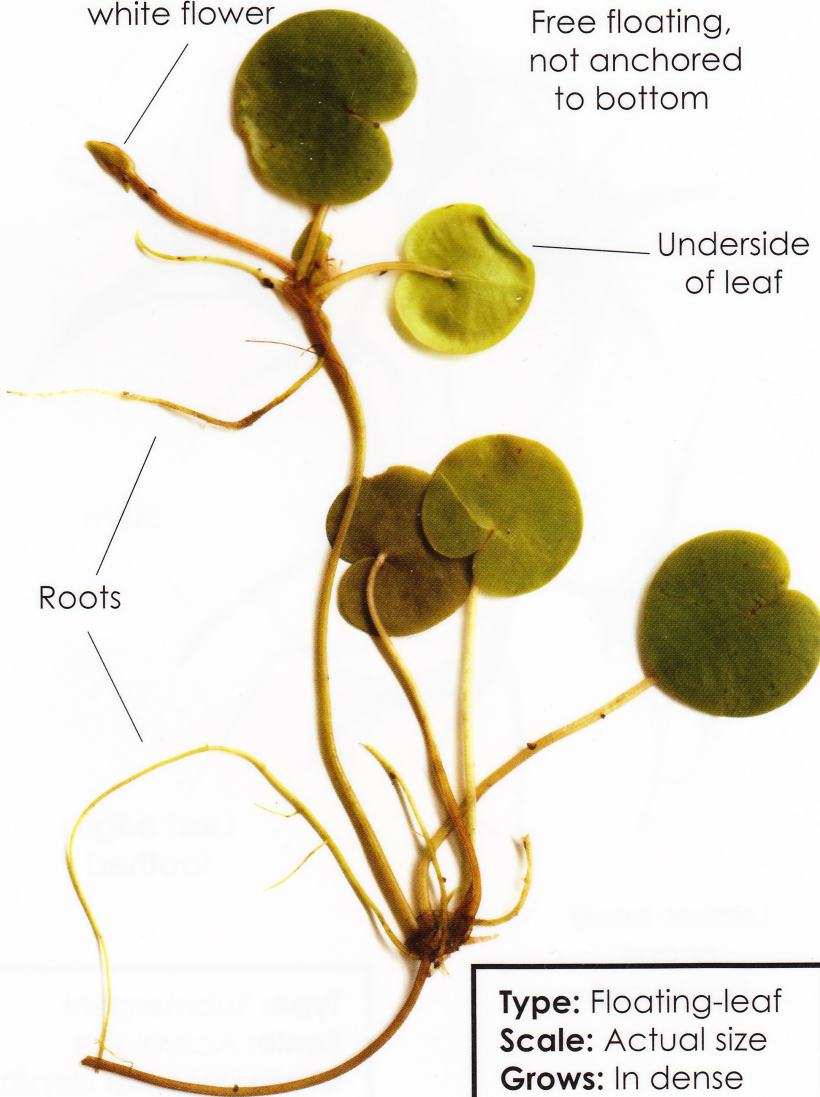
*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*

Bud of 3-petal,  
yellow center,  
white flower

Free floating,  
not anchored  
to bottom

Underside  
of leaf

Roots



**Type:** Floating-leaf

**Scale:** Actual size

**Grows:** In dense  
patches

**Mode of Infestation:**

Seed dispersal

## European Naiad (Exotic)

*Najas minor*



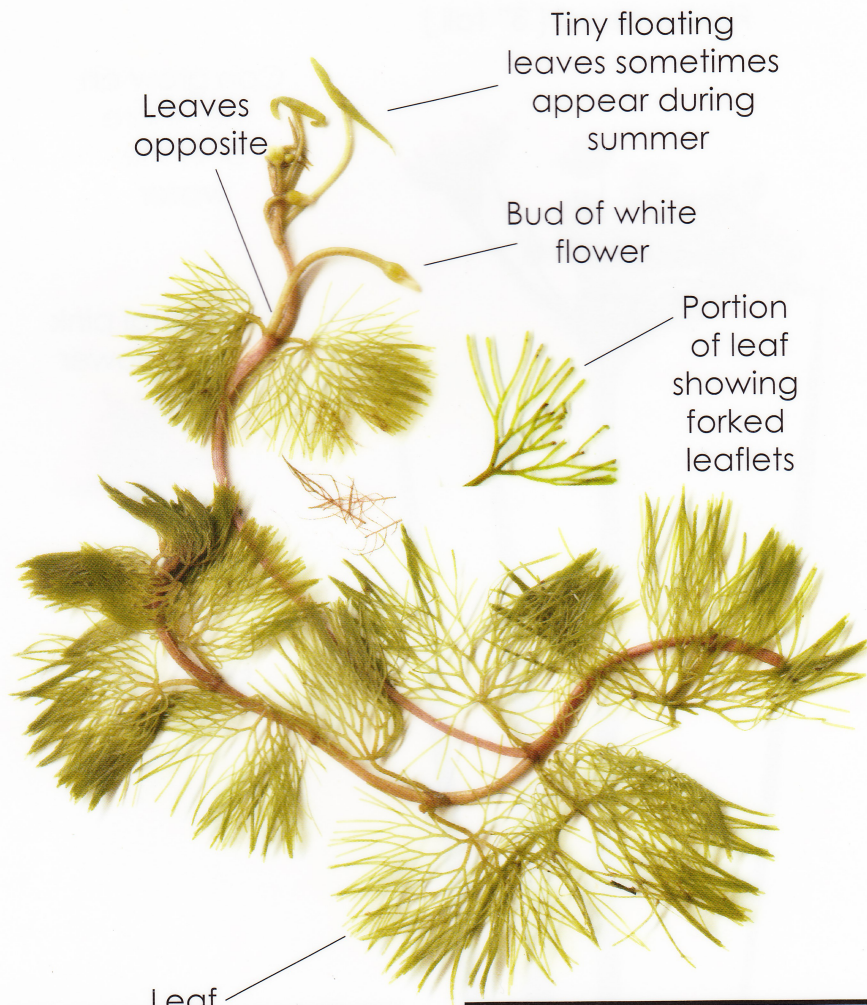
Leaves bend  
or curl  
backward

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** In water depth  
of 15 feet  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Seed dispersal



# Fanwort (Exotic)

*Cabomba caroliniana*



Leaves opposite

Tiny floating leaves sometimes appear during summer

Bud of white flower

Portion of leaf showing forked leaflets

Leaf fan-shaped, with long stem

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 7 feet in length  
**Mode of Infestation:** Fragmentation

## Flowering Rush (Exotic)

*Butomus umbellatus*

Flower head ( 3" tall )



Can grow on  
the shore  
or in the  
water

6-petal pink  
flower



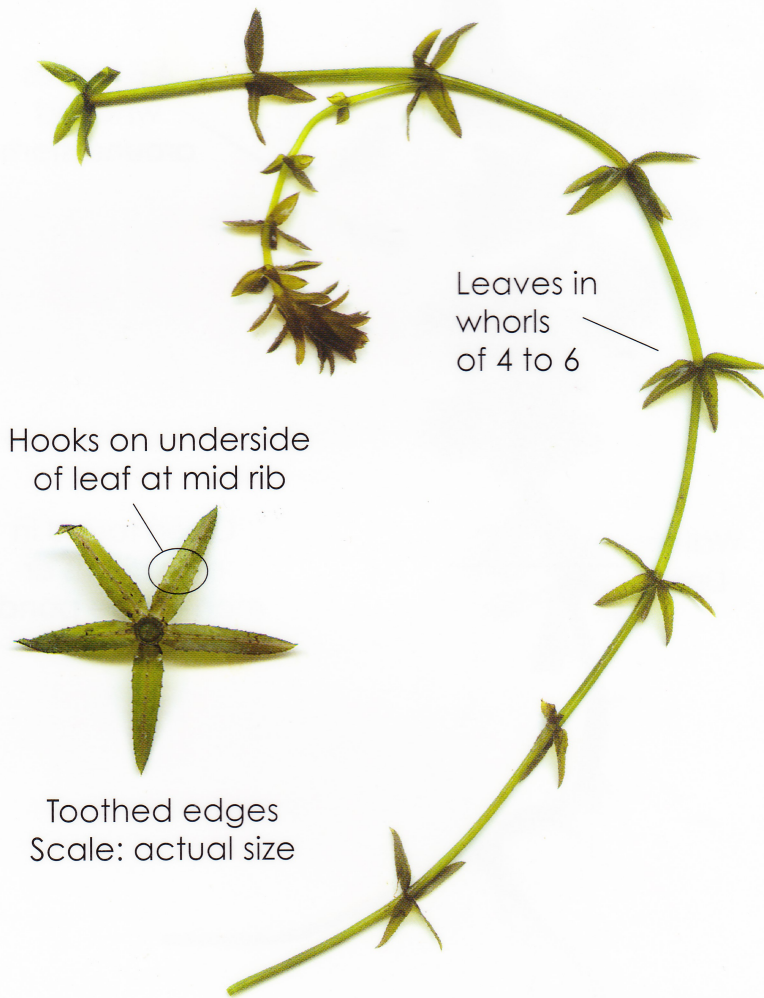
Scale: actual  
size

**Type:** Emergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** 4 feet or more  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Trailing root system  
and seed dispersal



## Hydrilla (Exotic)

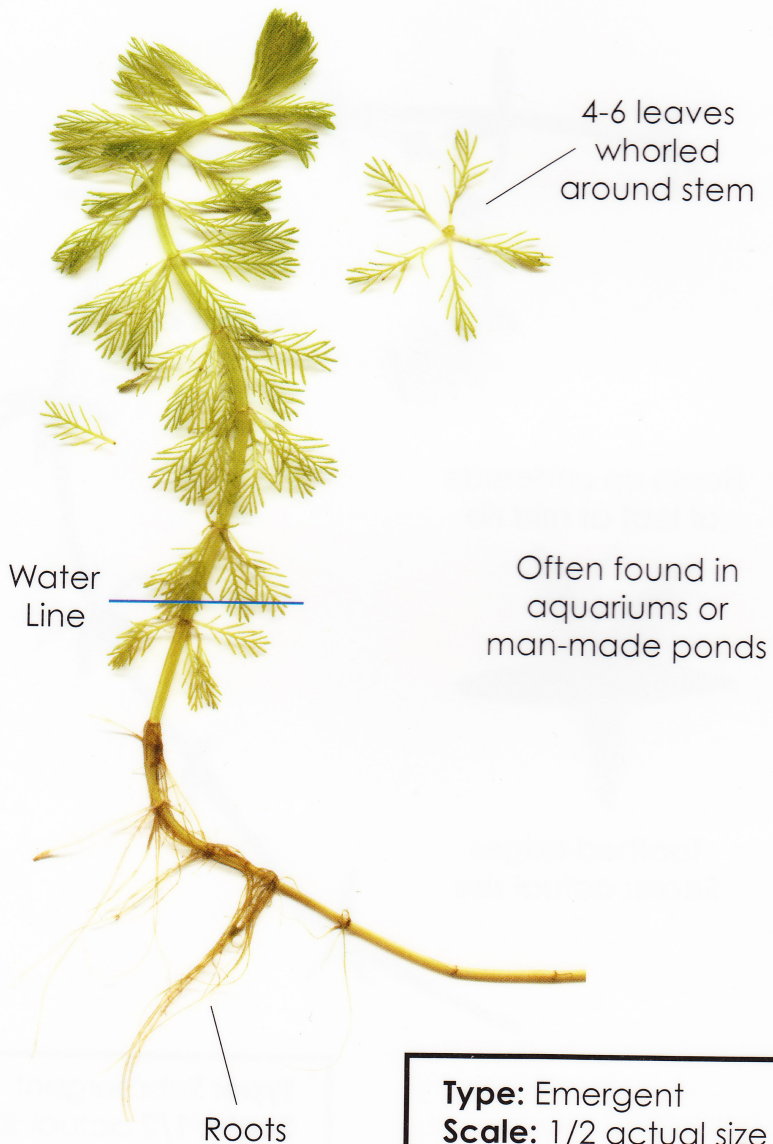
*Hydrilla verticillata*



**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** 25 ft. or more  
**Mode of infestation:**  
Fragmentation

## Parrot Feather (Exotic)

*Myriophyllum aquaticum*



**Type:** Emergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 2 feet  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Fragmentation



## Purple Loosestrife (Exotic)

*Lythrum salicaria*, *L. virgatum*, *L. alatum*



Can be purple  
to hot pink  
in color

Can produce  
over a million  
seeds a season

Multiple  
flowers  
on  
a stalk

Opposite  
or  
whorled  
leaves

**Type:** Emergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 10 feet tall  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Seed dispersal

## Variable Milfoil (Exotic)

*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*

Budding flowers  
that may not  
develop every  
year

Bushy and  
tapered



Feather-like leaf

Can be brown  
or green, and  
have red,  
green or  
brownish stems



**Type:** Submergent

**Scale:** Actual size

**Grows:** Up to 16  
feet tall

**Mode of Infestation:**  
Fragmentation



# Water Chestnut (Exotic)

*Trapa natans*

Triangular-shaped, floating leaves look like a rosette

Bladder on stem supports leaf

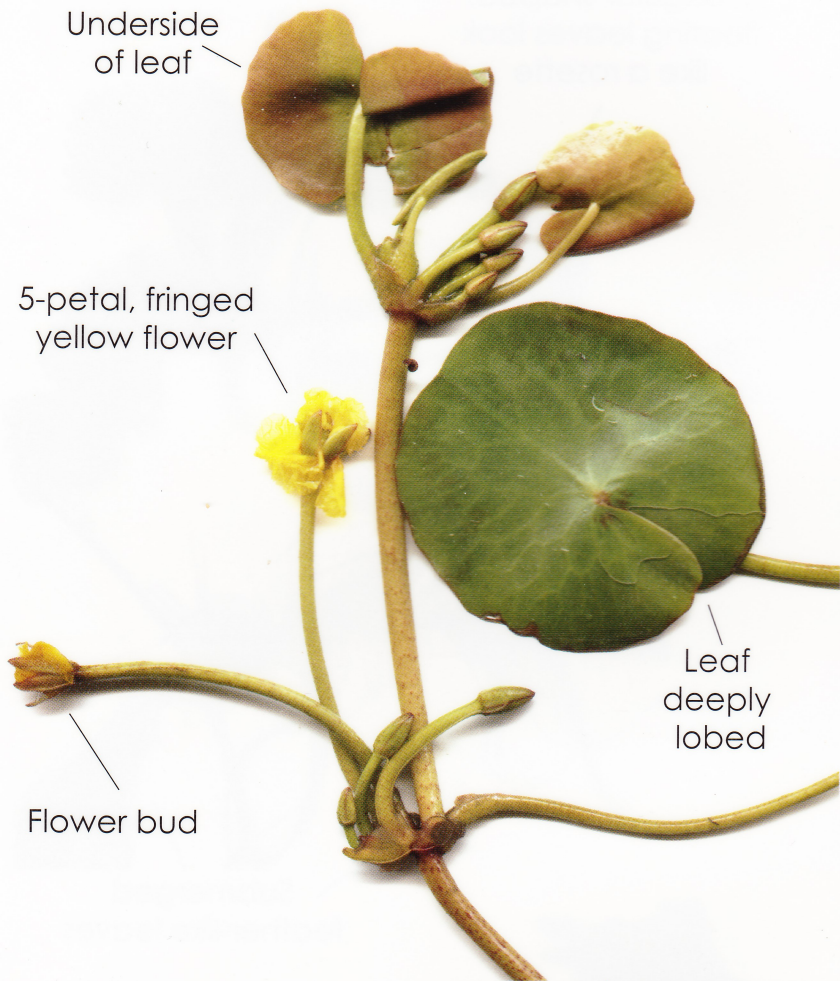
Submerged feather-like leaves

Seed with sharp, barbed points  
Scale: Actual size

**Type:** Floating-leaf  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 16 feet  
**Mode of Infestation:**  
Seed dispersal

# Yellow Floating Heart (Exotic)

*Nymphoides peltata*



**Type:** Floating-leaf  
**Scale:** 3/4 actual size  
**Grows:** In dense patches  
**Mode of Infestation:** Seed dispersal



## Bladderwort (Native)

*Utricularia* sp.

Tightly packed  
winter bud

Most bladderworts are floaters  
and have no true roots

Yellow, purple or  
whitish flowers

Leaf with  
bladders

Forked  
leaflets

Bladders can be  
black, green or  
appear transparent

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 2 feet

## Coontail (Native)

*Ceratophyllum demersum*

Can develop  
compact winter  
buds



Leaf is forked  
with teeth on  
one side; stiff  
(plastic like)  
and whorled  
around stem

Free-floating  
underwater  
with no roots



Can be light or  
dark green,  
brownish or  
a combination

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** 2 ft. in length

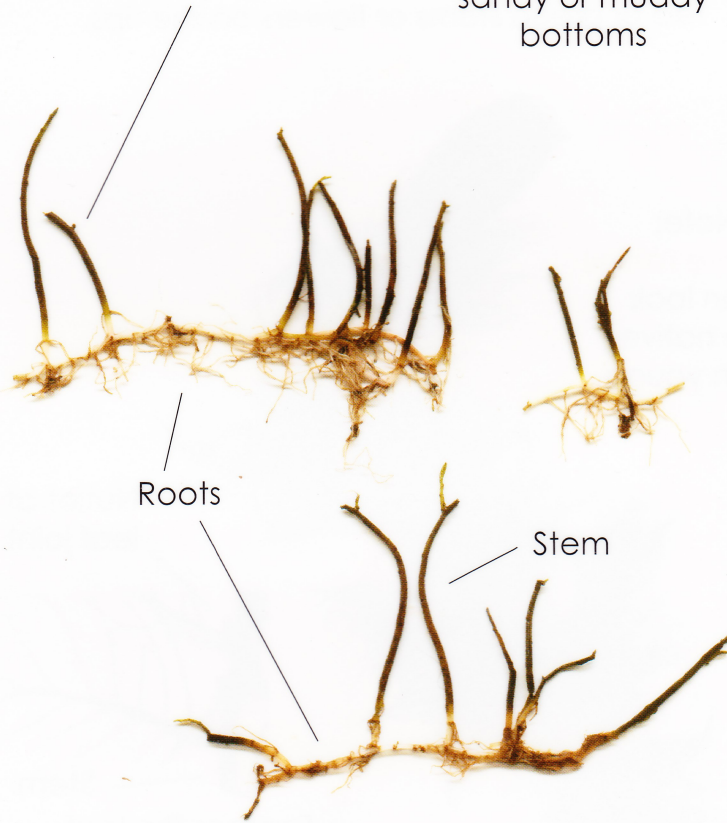


## Dwarf Milfoil (Native)

*Myriophyllum tenellum*

Leaves appear as  
small bumps

Great stabilizer of  
sediment; grows in  
sandy or muddy  
bottoms



Roots

Stem

One of six native  
milfoil species

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 6 inches tall

## Milfoil (Native)

*Myriophyllum humile*

Humile and one other native milfoil can have fruits (nutlets) at the leaf joints. Other similar milfoils can be green with alternate or whorled leaves, have red or green stems or flowers on the tips.

Note:  
Invasive milfoil  
can look  
like native  
when young.



Nutlet at  
leaf joint



Stem

Feather-like leaf  
Scale: Twice actual size

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** Actual size  
**Grows:** 1-2 feet tall



## Water Parsnip (Native)

*Sium suave*



**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Up to 12 inches

## Water Starwort (Native)

*Callitriche* sp.

Rosette floats on surface of water



Grows in  
still and  
slow-moving  
waters

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Usually less  
than one foot tall



## Waterweed (Native)

*Elodea* sp.

Note: This plant is a look-alike to **Hydrilla** (page 9) and **Brazilian elodea** (page 1); if you see any new plants like this, contact the NH Dept. of Environmental Services at 603/271-2248

Limp, long and narrow leaves; can be short and stiff

More densely packed leaves

3 leaves in a whorl around the stem

Flowers are minute, on a thin, thread-like stem emerging from plant

**Type:** Submergent  
**Scale:** 1/2 actual size  
**Grows:** Most common up to 2 feet or less, but can be taller

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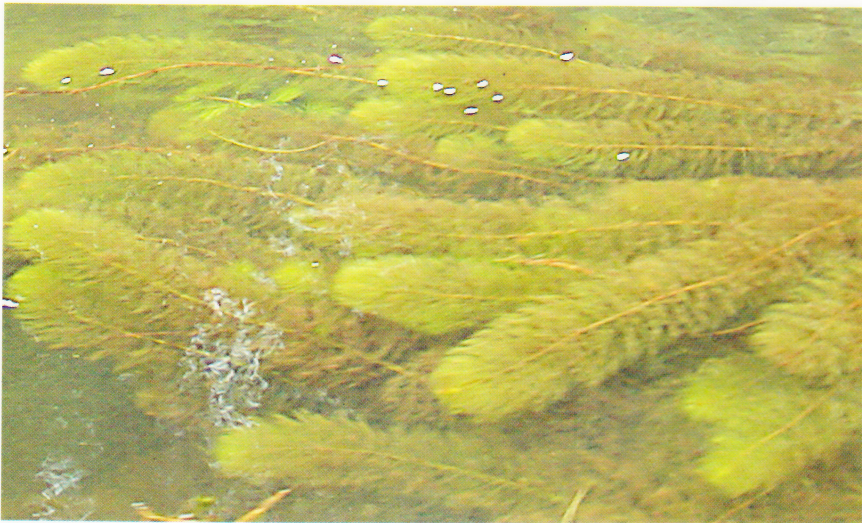
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### **Variable Milfoil (Exotic)** as seen through the surface of the water



Printed by R.C. Brayshaw & Co., Inc. Warner, NH

Photo by Rae Tober