

Hydrilla verticillata

Invasive to Maine

Hydrilla,
Florida Elodea, Oxygen Weed

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 COMMUNITY	LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF SHAPE	LEAF EDGE
 EMERGENT	 ALTERNATE	 ELLIPTICAL	 FEATHER DIVIDED
 FLOATING LEAF	 OPPOSITE	 BLADE	 TOOTHED
 SUBMERSED	 WHORLED	 OVAL	 SMOOTH

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