

EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

Myriophyllum spicatum



Eurasian Watermilfoil Leaf

Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center



Eurasian Watermilfoil Flower



Eurasian Watermilfoil Stem

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IDENTIFICATION

LIFE CYCLE:

Submerged aquatic perennial

LEAVES:

3 to 4 bright green leaves that are 1 1/4 inch long with 12 to 28 threadlike divisions are whorled around the stem at each joint. Leaves rarely extend above the water surface.

FLOWER:

Rigid, pink flowering spike, 2 to 8 inches long, held erect above water. Small, yellow, four-petaled petals in clusters.

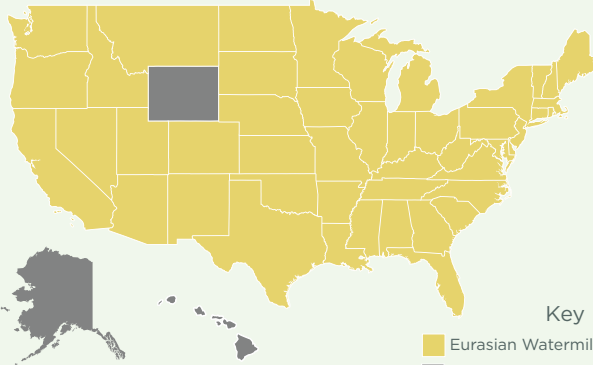
STEMS:

Slender, hairless, leafless toward base, 10 feet or longer and 1/10 inch thick. Grow to water surface then branch forming dense floating mats. Somewhat whitened when dry.

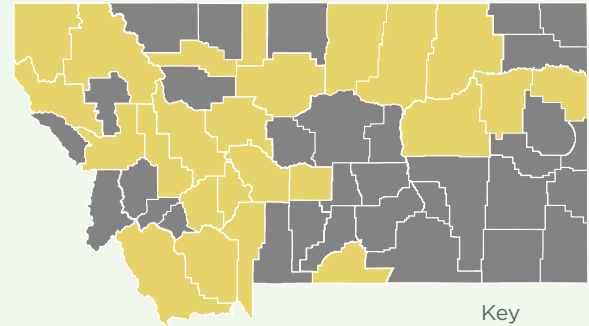
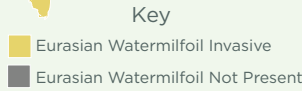
For more detailed information on Protecting Montana Waters from Aquatic Invasive Species visit

<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species>

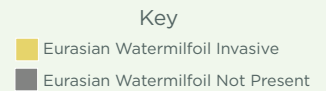
DISTRIBUTION



Source:
USGS NAS; May 2023



Source:
MT Natural Heritage Program,
observation data; May 2023



HABITAT:

Submerged in water 4-10 meters deep.
Can survive in moving water; prefers alkaline conditions.

NATIVE TO:

Eurasia, Northern Africa

PREVENTION AND SPREAD:

Originally introduced in water gardens it now grows and reproduces rapidly; reproduction is mainly done through fragmentation which can occur from waves or boats. Prevent the spread by cleaning, draining, and drying waders, boats, any anything else that comes into contact with the water. Place any collected plant material in plastic bags to dispose of.

IMPACTS:

Create dense, floating mats that outcompete native plants, disrupts recreation, and can clog water pipes. Decreases water quality by contributing to nutrient loading and sedimentation and decreasing oxygen.

IN MONTANA:

Listed as a Priority 2A Noxious Weed.

Sources:
Montana Noxious Weeds by Monica Pokorny and Jane Mangold
Montana Field Guide & *Aquatic Invasive Species Threatening the Crown of the Continent*

NATIVE LOOKALIKES: Two native watermilfoil species in Montana
Short Spiked Water-milfoil *Myriophyllum sibiricum*
Whorl-leaved Watermilfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum*
 To differentiate between these native species and invasive Eurasian watermilfoil, take a specimen out of the water, the native species leaves will remain rigid, while the invasive leaves will fall. However, Eurasian Watermilfoil has the ability to hybridize with *M. sibiricum*, which makes identifications very difficult.

Non-native Milfoil

- Square-like tips
- More than 13 leaflet pairs



Native Milfoil

- More angled tips
- Fewer than 13 leaflet pairs



Minnesota AIS Research Center



Paul Skawinski, Aquatic Plants of the Upper Midwest



Paul Skawinski, Aquatic Plants of the Upper Midwest

If you see or suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, please save a specimen, and record the location.

Report observations to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species/report-an-ais>
 Or call the MT FWP front desk at 406-444-2440



1075 South Ave West | Missoula, MT 59801 | 406-258-4200 | www.missoulaeduplace.org