

SHORELINE

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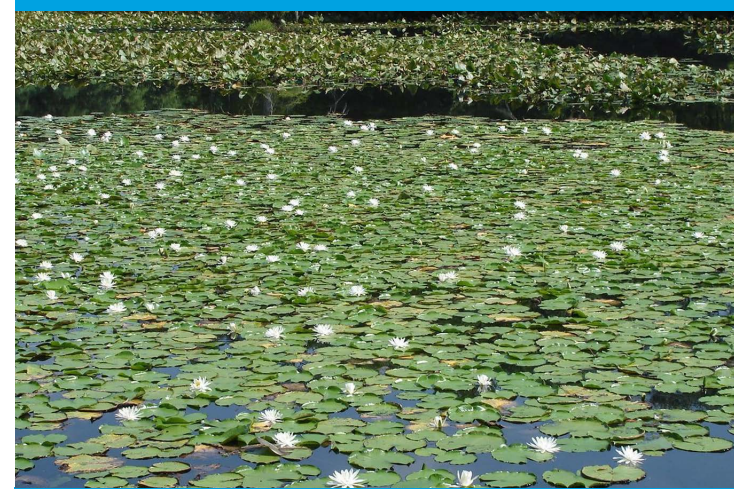
ROOTED, FLOATING-LEAFED

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MONTANA

AQUATIC INVASIVE PLANTS



An identification guide for invasive plant species in Montana waters

Suspect it, report it!
Help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Montana waters.



FRAGRANT WATER LILY *Nymphaea odorata*



Leaves and flowers seen floating on the surface, leaves are round and split partway, texture is thick and glossy, green on the top of the leaf and purplish red on the bottom and the stalk. The flower has 17-43 white to pinkish petals and yellow stamens. Similar in appearance to the native Pygmy Waterlily (*Nymphaea leibergii*) which has fewer (7-15) petals and smaller sepals when compared to Fragrant Water Lily.

Introduced as an aquatic ornamental species, it continues to spread through long, branching rhizomes underwater that send out roots and shoots from its nodes. If a piece of the plant is moved to different bodies of water, these rhizomes can establish a new population of Fragrant Water Lily. To prevent further invasion, avoid planting as an ornamental species, dispose of and clean any vegetation found on boats, equipment, and gear before recreating in another body of water.

YELLOW FLOATING HEART *Nymphoides peltate*



The heart-shaped floating leaves are green to yellow green, occasionally with purple on the underside, and have scalloped edges. Diameter of leaves range from 2-5 inches. Stalks emerge a few inches out of the water with bright yellow flowers with 5 fringed petals. Distinctly different from the native Yellow Pond Lily (*Nuphar polysepala*) that also has heart-shaped floating leaves and an emerging yellow flower with 10-20 waxy petals forming a globe shaped flower.



FLOWERING RUSH *Butomus umbellatus*



Flowering Rush grows up to 9 feet tall, emerging up to 4.5 feet above the surface of the water. Leaves are long and straight with smooth edges that create a triangular shaped cross section. Flowers are arranged in an umbrella shape on a round leafless stem with three white to deep pink petals per bloom. Flowering Rush rarely produces seeds, fruit is 0.5 inches long and dark brown.



YELLOWFLAG IRIS *Iris pseudacorus*



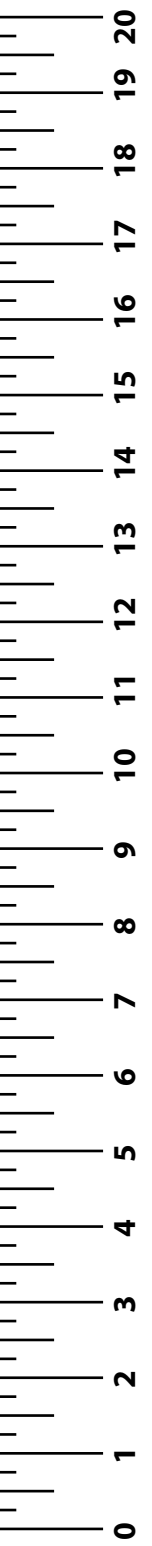
Leaves are 1.5-3 feet long and 0.3-1 inch wide, flat with a raised central vein, and dark green color. The leaves emerge from the ground in a fan-like arrangement and end with a pointed tip giving a sword-like appearance. Stems are branched with sparse leaves. Flowers are large, yellow with 6 petals, 3 pointed upwards and 3 pointed downwards, tongue shaped with purple to light-brown veins. Produces multiple flat brown, 3 chambered seed pods 1-4 inches long.



PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE *Lythrum salicaria*



Stems range from 3 to 10 feet tall, stiff, occasionally with soft hairs. Stems are typically square but can be 6 and 8 sided. Leaves are opposite spiraling along the stem, lance-shaped, with soft hairs and smooth edges. Flowers appear in dense, vertical clusters between 2 inches and 3 feet long, with 4 to 8 wrinkled petals. Purple Loosestrife produces numerous dark brown seeds in a two-chambered capsule.



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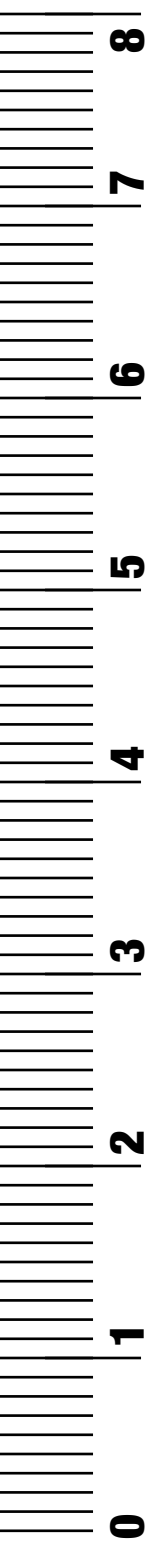
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STARRY STONEWORT

Nitellopsis obtuse



Stems are green and grass-like with 4-6 branching divisions of uneven lengths. Starry Stonewort can grow to around 6 feet tall and produce a star-shaped bulbils or clone that can detach from the plant and grow into a new plant.



CLEAN Completely remove all mud, water, and vegetation before leaving access area.

DRAIN All water from watercraft and equipment.

DRY Your watercraft and equipment. Aquatic invaders can survive only in water and wet areas.

DISPOSE of unwanted bait, fish parts, and packing materials, in the trash; do not dump them in the water or on land.

BRAZILIAN WATER WEED

Egeria densa



Stems are bright green with leaves attached directly to the stem in groups of 4-6 radiating from a single node with finely toothed margins. Upper leaves are 0.6-1.6 inches in length and 0.08-0.2 inches in width. Lower leaves are opposite and scale like. Flower is small, white, glossy, with 3 wrinkled petals that emerge up to 1.5 inches from the surface of the water.

PARROTFEATHER WATERMILFOIL

Myriophyllum aquaticum



Stems of mature plants can grow 6-15 feet tall and are blue green with emergent and submerged leaf forms. Emergent leaves may grow up to 1 foot above the water surface, are greener and more divided or feather-like with 4-6 leaves around the stem and 12-36 leaflet segments per leaf. Submerged leaves appear decayed with a reddish orange color, shorter at 0.4-1.2 inches long, and fewer divisions. Parrotfeather Watermilfoil flowers spring and fall with small white flowers.

CURLYLEAF PONDWEED

Potamogeton crispus



Stems are slightly flattened and branched. Leaves are attached directly to the stem, situated one per node, 2-3 inches long. Leaves are oblong, wavy like lasagna noodles, have serrated edges like a bread knife, and can be green to reddish brown. Curlyleaf Pondweed flowers between May and June, the flowers are small with 4 petal-like lobes, can be brown to cream-colored. Frequently confused with the native Richardson's Pondweed (*Potamogeton richardsonii*) that has similar alternate, wavy leaves, however, is not serrated and more ovular than the Curlyleaf Pondweed.

Aquatic Invasive Species can displace native species, clog waterways, impact irrigation and power systems, degrade ecosystems, threaten recreational fishing opportunities, and cause wildlife and public health problems.

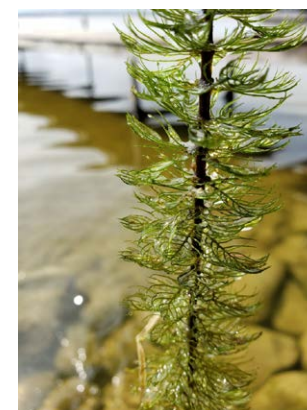
Prevention is the first line of defense! Do your part to stop the spread of AIS by taking simple precautions.

EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

Myriophyllum spicatum



Stems are slender, hairless, and leafless toward the base, can grow up to 12 feet in length. Leaves are 1 ¼ inches long, bright green, and feather-like with 12-48 leaflet pairs around the stem with 3-4 leaves per node. The flowers appear above the water as a pink, rigid spike, 2-8 inches long with small, yellow, clusters of four petals. When taken out of the water, Eurasian Watermilfoil becomes limp and loses its shape. Native species, Common Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum sibiricum*) and Whorled Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*) remain rigid.



Native Common Watermilfoil



Native Whorled Watermilfoil

HYDRILLA

Hydrilla verticillata



Stems are thin and long with pointed, bright green leaves. Hydrilla leaves have serrated edges, 3-8 leaves per node, situated around the stem. Flowers are thread-like and tubular with translucent white to red petals. The native look-alike Broad Waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*) has speckled leaves in contrast to Hydrilla.

Introduced as an aquarium plant and is spread through improper disposal, it mostly reproduces vegetatively due to fragile stems that fragment easily and can grow new plants from rhizomes and create thick mats of vegetation. To prevent introductions, dispose of all aquarium plants in secure plastic bags and clean, drain, and dry all equipment that has touched water before entering another body of water.

SPINY WATER-NYMPH

Najas marina



Stems are prickly and branched, floating on the surface with lengths ranging from 2.5-18 inches long, 0.02-0.2 inches wide. Leaves are also prickly with coarsely serrated teeth on each side. The flowers are inconspicuous, single flower spikes rise from where the leaves attach to the stems. Male flowers are 0.07-0.1 inches long and female flowers are 0.1-0.2 inches long.



Suspect it, report it! Help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Montana waters. Report observations to MT FWP at 406-444-2400 or scan the QR code.

