Catalog of Species Search Results

:: Catalog of Species Search

Cabomba caroliniana

(Fanwort
Carolina fanwort)

Common Name(s) | Full Scientific Name | Family Name Common | Family Scientific Name | Images | Synonyms | Description | Similar Species | Reproductive/Dispersal Mechanisms | Distribution | History of Introduction in New England | Habitats in New England | Threats | Early Warning Notes | Management Links | Documentation Needs | Additional Information | References | Data Retrieval | Maps of New England Plant Distribution

COMMON NAME

Fanwort
Carolina fanwort

FULL SCIENTIFIC NAME

Cabomba caroliniana Gray

FAMILY NAME COMMON

Water-shield family

FAMILY SCIENTIFIC NAME

Cabombaceae

IMAGES

Close-up of flower

Incursion

Habit

Flower close-up

NOMENCLATURE/SYNONYMS

Synonyms: *Cabomba caroliniana* var. *caroliniana* Gray
C. aquatica DC. not Aubl.
C. viridifolia Hort.

DESCRIPTION

Botanical Glossary

Cabomba caroliniana is a submersed, rhizomatous, aquatic perennial that can have stems up to 2 m (6.5 ft.) long. It has two types of leaves. The petioled, submersed leaves are opposite, and sometimes whorled, peltate in form, and are 2-5 cm (0.75-2 in.) in width. These leaves are repeatedly divided into filiform segments. The small floating leaves are few and linear-elliptic in shape, have entire margins and often have a basal notch. These leaves are 6-20 mm (0.25-0.75 in.) long.

The long-peduncled (3-10 cm (1.2-4 in.)) flowers are most often white with yellow at the center, but are rarely pink or purplish. The sepals and petals are about 1.25 cm (0.5 in.) across. The petals are auriculate at the their bases, and obovate in shape. The 3 ripened carpels are flask shaped.

Page References Bailey 385, Crow & Hellquist 38, Fernald 642, Flora of North America 79, Gleason & Cronquist 46, Holmgren 44, Magee & Ahles 494. See reference section below for full citations.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Myriophyllum spp. (watermilfoils)*
Ranunculus aquatilis s.l. (water buttercup) Picture of *R. aquatilis*
Megalodonta beckii (Torr. ex Spreng.) Greene (Beck's watermarigold) Picture of *M. beckii*

*See write-ups in the catalog of species for *Myriophyllum* spp.

The leaves of *Myriophyllum* are whorled and the plants have small, axillary flowers. *Ranunculus aquatilis* has alternately arranged leaves as compared with the opposite arrangement of *C. caroliniana*. *Megalodanta beckii* has yellow, composite flowers and sessile leaves, while *C. caroliniana* has white flowers and petioled leaves.

REPRODUCTIVE/DISPERSAL MECHANISMS

This plant can be dispersed by seed but is more often spread by vegetative parts. These parts are spread by adhering to birds or boats, or by water currents.

DISTRIBUTION

Cabomba caroliniana is native to the southeastern part of the United States as well as some parts of South America. It is present from Florida to New Hampshire, west to Kansas, as well as Washington and Oregon. It has become invasive in other parts of the world such as India, Australia and Japan. In New England it is present in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

HISTORY OF INTRODUCTION IN NEW ENGLAND

Considered native to the southeastern United States, *Cabomba caroliniana* was most likely introduced in the northern part of the country as an aquarium plant. It was either spread into New England by waterfowl, by pieces of the plants stuck onto boats, or by being washed downstream. The first northeastern report was from Hatfield, Massachusetts in 1930. In was reported from Rhode Island in 1936, and collected in Connnecticut since 1937.

HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND

Aquatic
Lake or Pond
River or Stream
Yard or Garden

Cabomba caroliniana prefers to lakes and ponds, but can also be found in slow-moving rivers and streams. It normally grows in 0.9-3 m (3-10 ft.) of water.

THREATS

Cabomba caroliniana has the ability to form extremely dense stands and clog drainage systems. It also interferes with recreational activities such as swimming and boating. This plant is still sold in the aquarium trade, so it is often discarded in local waterbodies. The plants are able to root from vegetative parts and thus are easily spread. In the north it appears that the seeds do not readily germinate. However, viable shoots have been observed in January beneath ice.

MANAGEMENT LINKS

Washington State Department of Ecology

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS

Documentation required: Herbarium specimen or mounted snippet of the branch.
Best time for documentation: Summer, fall.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Integrated Taxonomic Information System
Has general taxonomic information about the species.

The PLANTS database
General information and a map

Washington State Department of Ecology
General information, including economic importance

The Connecticut River Homepage
Photographs and general information

University of Florida, Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants
Photographs and general information

Texas Agricultural Extension Service- Aquaplant
Images and brief description

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DATA RETRIEVAL

Select a task by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- (•) Formatted display as table
- ( ) Export as comma-delimited text file

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MAPS OF PLANT DISTRIBUTION IN NEW ENGLAND

Select a study area by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- (•) The whole New England area
- ( ) One or more states
- ( ) One or more counties
- ( ) One or more towns (county sub-divisions)

Submit Selection