Catalog of Species Search Results

:: Catalog of Species Search

Myriophyllum aquaticum

(Parrotfeather
Brazilian watermilfoil)

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

Parrotfeather
Brazilian watermilfoil

FULL SCIENTIFIC NAME

Myriophyllum aquaticum (Vell.) Verdc.

FAMILY NAME COMMON

Watermilfoil family

FAMILY SCIENTIFIC NAME

Haloragaceae

IMAGES

Close-up of plant

Habit

Emergent stems

Incursion

NOMENCLATURE/SYNONYMS

Synonyms: *Enydria aquatica* Vell.
Myriophyllum brasiliense Camb.
Myriophyllum proserpinacoides Gillies ex Hook. & Arn.

DESCRIPTION

Botanical Glossary

Myriophyllum aquaticum is an herbaceous aquatic plant that can grow 2-5 m (6.5-16 ft.) in length. The bluish-green stems are stout. The numerous leaves of this plant are pinnately dissected and arranged in whorls of 4 to 6 around the stem. They have both emergent and submerged leaves. The emergent leaves can be up to 30 cm (1 ft.) out of the water. They measure 2-5 cm (0.75-2 in.) long and have 6-18 divisions per leaf. The submerged leaves are 1.5-3.5 cm (0.5-1.25 in.) long and have 20-30 divisions per leaf.

The flowers are located axillary to slightly modified leaves on the emergent inflorescences. They are positioned between two bracts and measure 1.5 mm (0.06 in.) long. The flowers do not have petals, but have white sepals. The plants are dioecious, and only female plants have been reported in the United States. The fruits of this plant are 1.5-2 mm (0.07 in.) long.

Page References Crow & Hellquist 194, Gleason & Cronquist 308, Holmgren 289, Magee & Ahles 778. See reference section below for full citations.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Myriophyllum species

REPRODUCTIVE/DISPERSAL MECHANISMS

Since all the known *Myriophyllum aquaticum* plants in the United States are female, the only means of reproduction for this plant in the U.S. is by fragmentation. Plant fragments can move downstream with the current, or attach to boats and animals.

DISTRIBUTION

Myriophyllum aquaticum is native to South America along the Amazon River. It has been introduced into South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Japan and parts of Europe. In the United States it has been reported in the west from Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Arizona and New Mexico. It has been reported from Massachusetts to Florida and west to Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. In New England it has been reported from

Connecticut and Massachusetts.

HISTORY OF INTRODUCTION IN NEW ENGLAND

Myriophyllum aquaticum was most likely introduced in the late 1800's for aquaria and water gardening. The first known specimen of this plant was collected in 1890 from New Jersey. It also became established in the early 1900's around Washington, D.C. because of water gardening.

This plant reported in 1929 from southeastern New York (Long Island). In 1946 the first report in New England came from West Lake in Guilford, Connecticut. In Massachusetts it has been reported from Cape Cod.

HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND

Aquatic
Lake or Pond
River or Stream
Yard or Garden

Myriophyllum aquaticum is found in lakes, ponds and quiet streams. The emergent form of this plant can survive on mudflats, indicating that it can tolerate water fluctuations. *Myriophyllum aquaticum* appears to thrive in high nutrient situations.

THREATS

Myriophyllum aquaticum has not yet been reported from the northern parts of New England, and its potential range is yet to be determined. In more southern regions, this plant forms monocultures that clog waterways, impeding recreational and commercial boating activities. These monocultures also disrupt the growth of native aquatic plants and provide breeding areas for mosquitoes. *Myriophyllum aquaticum* is a common water garden plant, which has the potential to escape into local waterways. The control of this plant is expensive, with costs in the order of tens of thousands of dollars in Washington state alone.

MANAGEMENT LINKS

Virginia Native Plant Society

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
Taxonomic information

PLANTS Database
General information and map

Virginia Native Plant Society
Fact sheet with description and control information

Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, University of Florida
General information and photographs

North Carolina State University
Fact sheet with description and images

King County Noxious Weeds
Description and illustrations

Washington State Department of Ecology
General information including control

Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk
Description and control information

REFERENCES

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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

Submit Selection

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