PLANTS

EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

Myriophyllum spicatum
Origin: Eurasia

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive submerged aquatic plant that can be easily mistaken for several native plants. Each leaf is blunt-tipped and finely divided into at least 12 pairs of leaflets, arranged in whorls of four on brown or green stems. The plant can grow up to 6 m in length. Tiny pink flowers may occur on emergent spikes in mid-June and again in late July. Although each plant can produce 100 seeds in a season, it reproduces more successfully via fragmentation.

INVASIVE RANKING, NYS

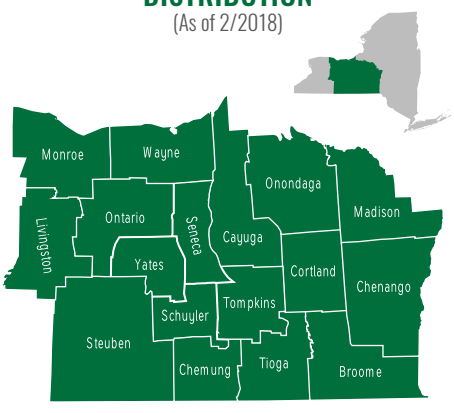
Very High

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Chemical
Mechanical
Physical
Biocontrol
Prevention

DISTRIBUTION

(As of 2/2018)



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HABITAT

This invasive can be found to depths of 10 m in lakes, ponds, and quieter sections of rivers and streams. It can grow in fresh or brackish water, across a wide range of temperatures, and thrives in disturbed areas with nutrient loading, intense plant management, and/or abundant motorboat use.

THREAT

Eurasian watermilfoil can spread very easily through fragmentation. This species forms dense mats that outcompete and displace native species, degrade habitat, and inhibit recreational activities.

MANAGEMENT

Education about practices such as clean, drain, and dry, as well as timely reporting of sightings is an important management practice to reduce the spread of this species and prevent new infestations. Once Eurasian watermilfoil is established, it is very hard to control. Mechanical control can enhance the spread of an infestation by creating and transporting plant fragments. If extreme care is taken to prevent or remove fragments, small infestations may be mechanically or manually removed. Many herbicides can control milfoil populations. Biocontrol insects or the triploid Grass Carp (*Ctenpharyngodon idella*) may also be options for control.

REFERENCE - https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/greatlakes/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=237
U.S. Geological Survey. [2017]. Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Database. Gainesville, Florida. Accessed [6/7/2017].

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