

ELODEA



Elodea is a rooted multi-branched perennial plant but can survive and grow as floating fragments. The dark green blade-like leaves ($\frac{3}{5}$ inch long and $\frac{1}{5}$ inch wide) are in whorls of three with finely toothed margins. The flowers of Elodea have three white petals with a waxy coating that makes them float.

Submerged portions of all aquatic plants provide habitats for many micro and macro invertebrates. These invertebrates in turn are used as food by fish and other wildlife species (e.g. amphibians, reptiles, ducks, etc.). After aquatic plants die, their decomposition by bacteria and fungi provides food (called "detritus") for many aquatic invertebrates. Elodea has no known direct food value to wildlife but is used extensively by insects and invertebrates.

Elodea is often confused with Hydrilla and Egeria. Elodea has only 3 leaves in the whorl and no midrib teeth.



EURASIAN MILFOIL



Eurasian watermilfoil is a perennial plant native to Europe, Asia, and Africa and was probably brought to the U.S. as an aquarium plant. Today it is considered one of the most aggressive and problematic plants in the U.S. because of the dense colonies which it forms. The stems are multi-branched, somewhat reddish in color, with gray-greenish feather-like



leaves. The leaves are in whorls of 3 to 5 around the stem with each leaf divided into 12 or more pairs of thin thread-like leaflets. Reddish flowers are borne on leafless spikes that rise above the surface a few inches. Eurasian watermilfoil can spread from seeds or by fragmentation.

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HYDRILLA



Hydrilla is a perennial plant that forms dense colonies and can grow to the surface in water over 20 feet deep. Hydrilla branches profusely and after reaching the surface it extends across it forming thick mats. Hydrilla can reproduce by fragmentation, from seeds, from turions (axillary buds), and from tubers. Leaves are blade-like about 1/8 inch and 3/8 inch long with small tooth margins and spines on the underside of the midrib which make them feel rough. Leaves are usually 4 to 8 in a whorl.



Hydrilla is native to Europe and Asia and was probably brought to the U.S. for the aquarium industry. It is considered a noxious pest because it grows so rapidly, out competing and eliminating native species, and forming surface mats that hinder recreation, navigation, and water intakes.

Hydrilla is often confused with the native Elodea or the non-native Egeria. Hydrilla has one or more teeth on the underside of the midrib, neither Elodea nor Egeria have these midrib teeth. The teeth make Hydrilla feel rough when drawn through your hand from base to tip. Flowers of Hydrilla are much smaller (1/4 inch in diameter) than Egeria.

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COONTAIL



Coontail, or sometimes called hornwort, is a dark olive-green, rootless submerged perennial plant that often forms dense colonies. Leaves are relatively stiff, whorled with many forks and small teeth along one edge. The tips of branches are crowded with leaves giving it a "coontail" resemblance. Coontail reproduces by seeds and fragmentation.



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PONDWEED



American pondweed is a perennial plant that has both floating and a few submerged leaves in an alternate pattern. The floating leaves are elliptical to oval 4 to 7 inches long and to 2 1 inches wide on long petioles. Submerged leaves are not abundant and are blade-like, somewhat transparent and smaller than floating leaves. Fruits are on spikes that often stand above the water's surface and are brownish to reddish 3 to 2 1 inches long and 1/8 to 1/4 inches wide.

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EELGRASS



Eelgrass, tapegrass, or wild celery are all common names for *Vallisneria*. Eelgrass is a rooted submerged plant often found in flowing water. It has long, thin, ribbon-like leaves (1/2 - 3/4 inches wide) that are commonly 3 to 4 feet long. The vein pattern in the leaves of eelgrass is very distinctive and resembles celery. Eelgrass has a vast rhizome system that allows it to form dense colonies and usually excludes other submerged plants.



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