

## Northwest Montana Aquatic Species Guide

### Submerged Aquatic Plants /Algae

#### Northern Watermilfoil (native)

*Myriophyllum sibiricum*



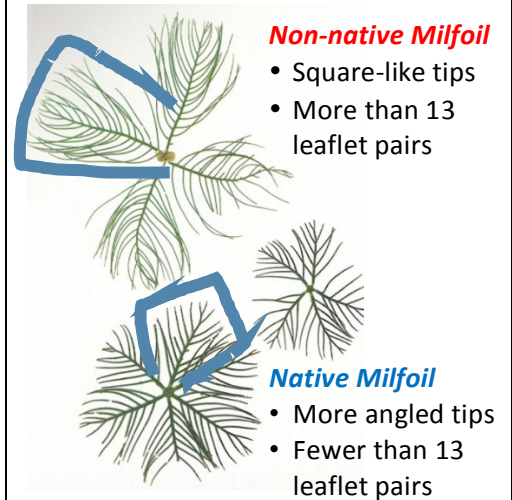
- Whorls of 4 leaves
- <13 leaflet pairs per leaf
- Erect when out of water

#### Eurasian Watermilfoil (invasive)

*Myriophyllum spicatum*



- Whorls of 4 leaves
- ≥13 leaflet pairs per leaf
- Collapses when out of water



#### Coontail (native)

*Ceratophyllum demersum*



- Forked leaves
- Whorled 5-12 leaves

#### Muskgrass/Stoneworts (native)

*Chara spp./Nitella spp.*



Macroalgae

- Whorled leaf-like filaments
- Chara – pungent odor

#### Sago Pondweed (native)

*Stuckenia pectinate*



- Thin 5-30 cm long leaves
- No floating leaves on surface

#### Richardson's Pondweed (native)

*Potamogeton richardsonii*



- Alternate, pointed leaves
- Leaves clasp straight stems
- Smooth, wavy leaf margin

#### White-stemmed Pondweed (native)

*Potamogeton praelongus*



- Alternate, pointed leaves
- Zig-zag internodes on stem
- Smooth, wavy leaf margin

#### Curly-leaf Pondweed (invasive)

*Potamogeton crispus*



- Alternate leaves, rounded leaf tips
- Green/reddish-brown leaves
- Toothed, wavy leaf margin



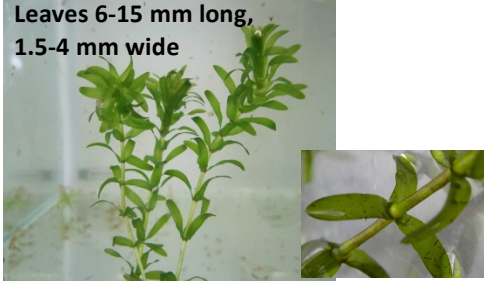
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### Submerged Aquatic Plants /Algae

#### Common Elodea (native)

*Elodea canadensis* (Common)

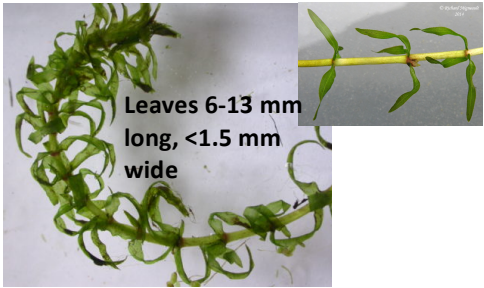
Leaves 6-15 mm long,  
1.5-4 mm wide



#### Western Elodea (native)

*Elodea nuttallii*

Leaves 6-13 mm  
long, <1.5 mm  
wide



- Whorls of 3 narrow leaves
- Finely serrated leaf margins

#### Hydrilla (undetected invasive)

*Hydrilla verticillata*



- Whorls of 3-8 leaves (typically 5)
- Saw-toothed leaf margins
- Pointed leaves 5-20 mm long, <2.5 mm wide

#### Brazilian Elodea (undetected invasive)

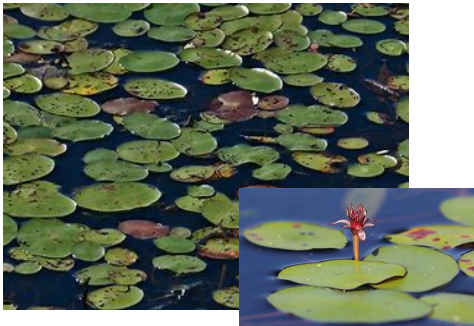
*Elodea densa*



- Whorls of 3-6 leaves (typically 4)
- Finely toothed leaf margins
- Leaves 25-32 mm long, <7 mm wide
- Grows up to 2 m in length

#### Watershield (native)

*Brasenia schreberi*



- Broadly elliptic to oval leaves, 4-12 cm long, 3-8 cm wide
- Leaves have long petioles attached alternately to branches
- Relatively small, purplish, many pistilled flowers
- Solitary flowers held just above the water on long peduncles
- Flowers typically have 3 sepals and 3 reddish-purple petals (1-1.5 cm long)

#### Fragrant Water Lily (invasive)

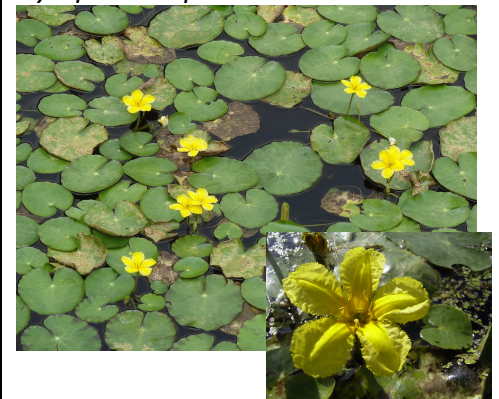
*Nymphaea odorata*



- Large nearly orbicular leaves, 8-20 cm
- Margins are smooth and bases are heart-shaped
- Flowers have at least 17 white showy petals and float with long peduncles
- Rhizomes can tolerate some desiccation

#### Yellow Floating Heart (undetected invasive)

*Nymphoides peltata*



- Stout, branching stems up to 2.5 mm thick
- Heart-shaped to circular floating leaves, 5-15 cm
- Yellow flowers with five fringed petals
- Leaves arise from rhizomes, usually opposite and unequal



## Northwest Montana Aquatic Species Guide

### Emergent or Submergent Aquatic Plants

#### **Bristly Sedge (native)**

*Carex comosa*



- Tufted, erect stems, up to 1 m
- Leaves up to 12 mm wide
- 5-9 nodding spikes

#### **Hardstem Bulrush (native)**

*Schoenoplectus acutus*



- Round/tapered stems, up to 2 m
- Leaf blades reduced to scales
- Small cluster of spikelets

#### **Flowering Rush (invasive)**

*Butomus umbellatus*



- Round stems, up to 1.5 m
- Triangular leaves that twist at tips
- Cluster of 20-50 pink flowers

#### **Western Blue Iris (native)**

*Iris missouriensis*



- Plants 10-50 cm tall
- Basal leaves emerge in a fan-like arrangement
- 4-6 cm long sepals, whitish with a yellow midstripe and blue veins and margins
- 3-4 cm long blue petals

#### **Broadleaf Cattail (native)**

*Typha latifolia*



- Plants 1-2 m tall
- 6-23 mm wide glaucous leaves
- Broad, flat, sheathing, and pale grayish-green leaves
- 7-15 cm long spikes

#### **Yellow Flag Iris (invasive)**

*Iris pseudacorus*



- Plants 1-1.5 m tall
- Basal leaves emerge in a fan-like arrangement
- Smooth edged, flattened sword-like leaves with a pointed tip and raised midrib
- Large pale to deep yellow flowers
- 2.5-10 cm long three-angled cylindrical capsule
- Smooth disc-shaped brown seeds



## Northwest Montana Aquatic Species Guide

### Molluscs

#### Pondsnails (native)

*Stagnicola spp.*



- Widely distributed, varied habitat
- Size/shape varies, up to 45 mm
- Tolerate anaerobic conditions
- Displays folded columella



#### Faucet Snail (invasive)

*Bithynia tentaculata*



- Up to 12-15 mm (0.5")
- Shell is shiny pale brown, oval in shape, with a relatively large and rounded spire consisting of 5–6 somewhat flattened whorls
- Can be a potential bio-fouling organism

#### New Zealand Mudsail (invasive)

*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*



- Adults can reach up to 4-6 mm (~ 0.15-0.25")
- Up to 750,000 snails per square meter
- Can make up to 95% of the macroinvertebrate population
- Reproduces asexually - it only takes one to start a new population

#### Western Pearlshell (native)

*Margaritifera falcata*



- Species of Concern (only native mussel found west of the divide)
- Elongate, compressed, dark, and slightly concave on ventral edge
- Weakly developed teeth and a purple nacre
- Normally 50-85 mm, 10 cm max

#### Zebra Mussel (invasive)

*Dreissena polymorpha*



- Small, triangular, striped shell
- <50 mm (~ 2")
- Smooth shell surface except for concentric wrinkles and growth rings
- Found in dense aggregations attached by byssal threads

#### Quagga Mussel (invasive)

*Dreissena bugensis*



- Small, triangular, with rounded carina between ventral and dorsal sides
- <50 mm (~ 2")
- Color patterns vary with black, cream, or white bands
- Fall over when placed on its side - will not sit flat. Zebra mussels will stand on edge



## Northwest Montana Aquatic Species Guide

### Crayfish

#### Signal Crayfish (native)

*Pacifastacus leniusculus*



- Up to 15 cm (6") in length
- White patch near claw hinge
- Blueish to reddish brown

#### Virile Crayfish (invasive to Western MT)

(native to Eastern MT)

*Orconectes virilis*



- Up to 15 cm (6") in length
- Orange/red claw tips

#### Rusty Crayfish (invasive)

*Orconectes rusticus*



- Up to 15 cm (6") in length
- Rusty spot on sides of carapace

### Amphibians

#### Western Boreal Toad (native)

*Anaxyrus boreas*



- Up to 11 cm (4 1/4")
- Green to brown skin with reddish brown warts
- Horizontal pupils

#### Columbia Spotted Frog (native)

*Rana luteiventris*



- Up to 10 cm (4")
- Dark brown, gray or olive skin with dark spots
- Underside of legs are red

#### N. American Bullfrog (invasive)

*Rana catesbeiana*



- Up to 20 cm (8")
- Green to brownish-green with dark spots and bands across legs
- Cream to yellowish underside

#### Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog (native)

*Ascaphus montanus*



- Up to 5 cm (2"), bumpy texture on skin
- Grey or brown
- Wide outer toe on hind foot

#### Pacific Tree Frog (native)

*Pseudacris regilla*



- Up to 5 cm (2"), dark Y in between eyes
- Green, brown, grey, reddish, or bronze
- Eye line from nostril to shoulder

#### Long-toed Salamander (native)

*Ambystoma macrodactylum*



- Up to 8.25 cm (3.25"), dark grey to black
- Green to yellow stripe down the middle of its back (rarely absent)
- Long toe on hind foot