

Aquatic Plants of Glen Lake

Summer 2009

Below are images and information on the most common aquatic plants in our lake.

Eurasian Watermilfoil



Eurasian water milfoil is an invasive, exotic plant species that has taken over lakes throughout North America. It is a submersed, perennial plant that forms colonies in deep waters that move toward the shoreline. In shallow waters, it creates a dense canopy that prevents native aquatic plants from getting sunlight. Eurasian water milfoil spreads quickly through fragmentation of plant tips and root expansion.

Illinois Pondweed



Illinois pondweed is a common submersed plant. There are about 80 species of pondweeds in the world. Illinois pondweed grows equally well in swift-flowing rivers or quiet lake margins. Illinois pondweed has two primary leaf shapes: the floating leaves are more-or-less elliptic in shape, and are much longer than they are wide; typically to eight inches long. The leaves are on long leaf stems or "petioles". The submersed leaves are about the same size, but are more lance-shaped. Submersed leaves have pointed tips and pointed bases. Illinois pondweed's greenish flowers are on spikes that are one to three inches long.

Brittle Naiad



Brittle Naiad (*Najas minor*) is a submerged aquatic invasive plant with thin stiff leaves that have serrated edges. The serrations on leaf edges are visible without magnification. Native versions of naiad also have serrated leaves but these are tiny and require magnification to observe. Leaf arrangement may be opposite or in whorls or clumps. Brittle naiad is most often found in water depths of 2 to 15 feet in ponds, lakes, reservoirs, and slow-moving streams. This plant, like many aquatic invasives, creates dense mats and inhibits the growth of native plants making fishing, swimming, or recreational boating difficult and unpleasant. This plant fragments readily making it easily spread by boats, waterfowl, or water currents. Waterfowl eat this plant and can move it between water bodies.

Chara



Chara unlike planktonic and floating algae is not always an eyesore and can benefit your pond or lake in many ways such as: naturally filtering the water, providing fish habitat, and preventing more aggressive plant grow. Chara can be selectively treated in swimming and fishing areas in larger bodies of water by raking the areas.

Curlyleaf Pondweed



Curly-leafed pondweed gets its name from its rippled, wavy, and crinkled submerged leaves, growing in water up to 15' deep. Curly-leafed pondweed can be an aggressive invader that can cover large portions of lakes. Please keep an eye out, report any new infestations, and pull all that you can! Young curly leaf pondweed plants can form under ice cover during late winter, which makes this invasive one of the first nuisance aquatic plants to emerge in the spring. Curly leaf pondweed spreads in many ways: turions, which look like small brown pine cones, are dispersed by water movement; established plants form large colonies from rhizomes; and curly leaf pondweed can also spread by fragmentation. Impacts: Curly-leaf pondweed is a highly competitive plant, capable of rapid growth and spread. Infestations may displace native species, reduce biodiversity, impede recreational activities, and reduce property values.

Elodea



A submerged aquatic perennial freshwater herb, usually firmly rooted to the bottom mud and producing a thick green mat below the water surface. Native to temperate regions of North America.

Hydrilla



Hydrilla is a prolific, rapidly-growing submerged aquatic plant that can thrive in water from a few inches to 20 feet deep. Leaves are small (1/2 - 3/4 inches), triangular-pointed and occur in whorls of 4 to 8 leaves along the stem. Unlike many native water plants, hydrilla leaves have serrated edges and one or more protruding barbs or bumps along the midrib on the underside. They are usually green but may bleach in the sun to yellow or brown. Stems are heavily branched near the surface and grow horizontally, forming dense mats of vegetation. Small tubers are present at the rooted base of the plant.

Common Pondweeds

