

# Stop

# The Invasion



Photograph courtesy of the Washington Department of Ecology

## Eurasian Watermilfoil

*Myriophyllum spicatum*

### Report Sightings

1-877-9-INFEST

[InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov](http://InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov)

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Photograph courtesy of Alison Fox, University of Florida, Bugwood.org

### What is it?

Eurasian watermilfoil is a submersed plant that grows in a variety of still and flowing fresh water bodies. It can tolerate a range of salinity, pH, and temperature. Watermilfoil forms dense mats that shade native aquatic plants, inhibit water flow, and hamper recreation. It is native to Europe, Asia, and North Africa.

### Is it here yet?

Yes. Eurasian watermilfoil has been documented throughout Washington.

### Why should I care?

Eurasian watermilfoil forms dense mats on the water surface, interfering with recreational activities, displacing native vegetation, causing flooding, and clogging water intakes. It can infest an entire lake quickly, and provides poor habitat and a low-quality food source.

### What should I do if I find it?

Do not purchase, plant, or trade this species. Contact your county noxious weed coordinator at [www.nwcb.wa.gov/links.htm](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/links.htm). Call: 1-877-9-INFEST or report online at [www.InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov/report.shtml](http://www.InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov/report.shtml).

### How can we stop it?

Clean your boat and any other equipment or gear that has entered potentially infested waters. Eurasian watermilfoil is on Washington's Wetlands and Aquatics Quarantine list, meaning it is prohibited to transport, buy, sell, offer for sale, or distribute Eurasian watermilfoil plants or plant parts (Washington Administrative Code 16-752-505). Eurasian watermilfoil also is listed as a Class B Noxious Weed in Washington, meaning it is designated for control in certain state regions (see [www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed\\_list/weed\\_regions.htm](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_list/weed_regions.htm)).



Photograph courtesy of Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

## What are its characteristics?

- Plant roots on the bottom of a water body and mainly grows underwater.
- Leaves grow in sets of four (or, rarely, five) arranged around a stem.
- Reddish flower spikes emerge a few inches above the water with small pinkish flowers and one short leaf below each flower.

## How do I distinguish it from native species?

Eurasian watermilfoil can be distinguished from native milfoils by the arrangement of its 1-inch- to 1.5-inch-long leaves in whorls of four around stems that are reddish or green in summer. It typically has more leaflet pairs per leaf (14-21) than native milfoils. The plant can also be confused with the invasive parrotfeather.

## Where do I get more information?

- Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture:  
<http://biology.burke.washington.edu/herbarium/imagecollection.php?Genus=Myriophyllum&Species=spicatum>
- Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health:  
[www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=3055](http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=3055)
- New York Invasive Species Clearinghouse:  
<http://nyis.info/plants/EurasianWatermilfoil.aspx>
- Washington State Department of Ecology:
  - [www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/weeds/milfoil.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/weeds/milfoil.html)
  - [www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/plantid2/descriptions/myrspi.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/plantid2/descriptions/myrspi.html)
- Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board:  
[www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed\\_info/Myriophyllum\\_spicatum.html](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/Myriophyllum_spicatum.html)
- Whatcom County:  
[www.co.whatcom.wa.us/publicworks/pdf/weeds/aquatic/eurasianwatermilfoil.pdf](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/publicworks/pdf/weeds/aquatic/eurasianwatermilfoil.pdf)

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