

Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Fact Sheet

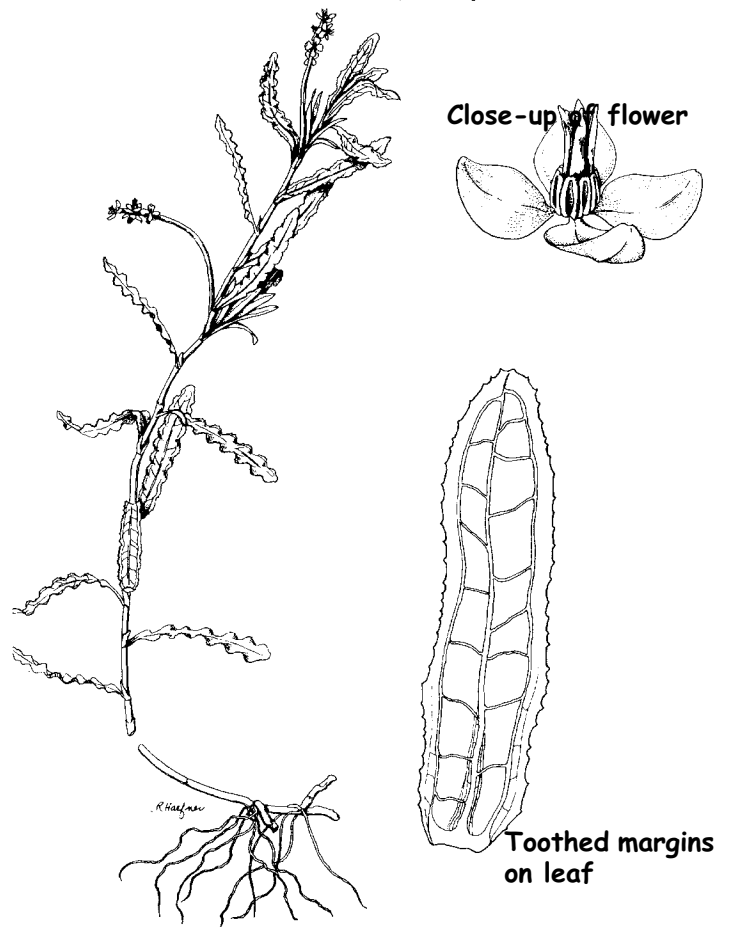
Curly Leaf Pondweed *Potamogeton crispus* L. Pondweed Family Vermont Class B Noxious Weed

Description: Curly leaf pondweed is a submersed, perennial aquatic plant easily identified by reddish-green, wavy leaves with finely toothed margins. The leaves are approximately one-half-inch (1-2cm) wide and 2 to 3 inches (5-7.5 cm) long. Stems are branched and somewhat flattened. Curly leaf pondweed spreads primarily by burr-like winter buds called "turions" which are hard and prickly. One plant may produce hundreds of turions, which are then dropped to the sediment to germinate the following year. Curly leaf pondweed flowers are small, somewhat inconspicuous, and arranged in a dense spike on a curved, one to 2 inch (5 cm) stalk. Seeds mature in June but play a small role in plant reproduction and spread. Plants begin to die back by mid-July.

Habitat: Curly leaf pondweed is found in freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, and in slightly brackish waters. It is tolerant of low light, very low water temperatures, and is a species of alkaline or nutrient-rich waters. Curly leaf pondweed gets a head start on native aquatic species in the spring and early summer when conditions are unfavorable to most native aquatic species. Curly leaf pondweed will invade shallow as well as deep water areas of 12 feet or more.

Threats: Curly leaf pondweed can grow in dense beds which outcompete native aquatic plants, reducing plant diversity. The dense surface mats may also interfere with water-based recreational activities.

Distribution: Native to Eurasia, Africa and Australia, curly leaf pondweed has spread aggressively since being introduced to North America in the mid-1800s. It can now be found in 48 states and has become invasive in many areas. In Vermont, it has been identified in Lake Champlain and at least 13 inland lakes.



(Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri. 1990. *Water Plants for Missouri Ponds*. Reprinted with permission.)

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Curly Leaf Pondweed

Pondweed Family (*Potamogetonaceae*)

Control: In areas where curly leaf pondweed growth is causing problems, mechanical removal and herbicides have been employed with varying degrees of success. In Vermont, there are no programs at this time that focus on removal of curly leaf pondweed.

References:

- Hellquist, C.B. and G.E. Crow. 1980. . *Aquatic Vascular Plants of New England: Part 1. Zosteraceae, Potamogetonaceae, Zannichelliaceae, Najadaceae*. New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire. Station Bulletin 515.
- Westerdahl, Howard E. , and Kurt D. Getsinger, eds. 1988. *Aquatic Plant Identification and Herbicide Use Guide*. Volume II: Aquatic Plants and Susceptibility to Herbicides.. US Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station. Technical Report A-88-9.
- Whitley, James R., Barbara Bassett, Joe G. Dillard, and Rebecca A. Haefner. 1990. *Water Plants for Missouri Ponds*. . Missouri Department of Conservation.



For more information about Vermont's invasive exotic plant species or if you would like to know how you can help, please contact:

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