NIWA

Taihoro Nukurangi

Climate, Freshwater & Ocean Science

[03/11/2020] [*Plant ID*]

Horizons Regional Council
Aquatic plant identification course

Paul Champion

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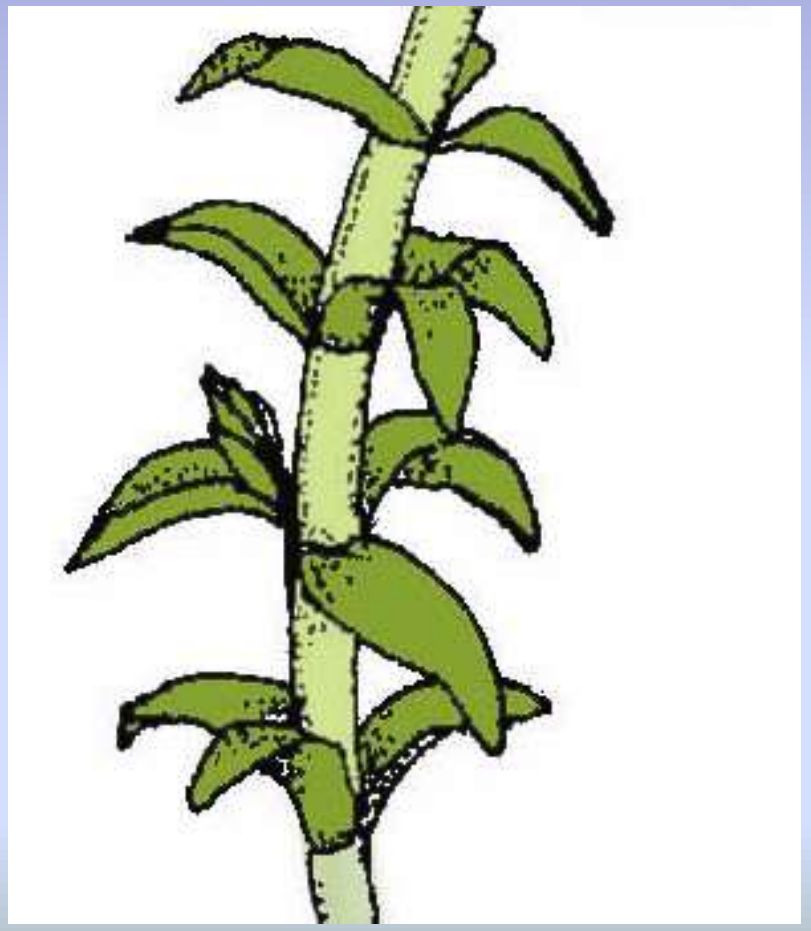
Climate, Freshwater & Ocean Science

NIWA
Taihoro Nukurangi

Submerged species

Identification of submerged plants

Elodea canadensis elodea, Canadian pondweed



Identification of submerged plants

Elodea canadensis

Key features

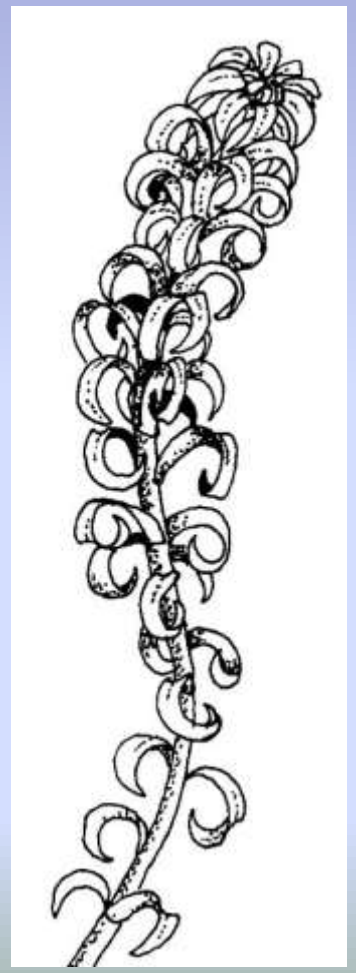
Leaves in whorls of 3, up to 1.2 cm long
Indistinct female flowers (rarely male)

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of submerged plants

Lagarosiphon major



lagarosiphon

Identification of submerged plants

Lagarosiphon major

Key features

Leaves not in whorls, alternately arranged
Leaves curled downwards, up to 2 cm long
Indistinct female flowers

Distribution

Common in North Island

Identification of submerged plants

Egeria densa

egeria

Identification of submerged plants

Egeria densa

Key features

Leaves mostly in whorls of 4-5 (cf. 3 in *Elodea canadensis*), up to 3 cm long
Acute leaf tip
Distinct white 3-petalled male flowers, 2 cm across

Distribution

Common in North Island

Identification of submerged weeds

Hydrilla verticillata hydrilla

Identification of submerged weeds

Hydrilla verticillata

Key features

Leaves usually in whorls of 4 or more, up to 1 cm long
Leaves often with toothed margins
Tubers and turions present
Indistinct male flowers in leaf axils

Distribution

Restricted to 4 Hawkes Bay lakes, nearly eradicated

Identification of pondweeds (*Potamogeton*)

Narrow leaves

P. crispus

P. ochreatus

Identification of pondweeds

Broader leaves

P. cheesemanii

Identification of pondweeds

Potamogeton crispus curled pondweed

Key features

Leaves alternately arranged
Leaves usually with crimped and waved margin
Main vein usually red
Stem flattened

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of pondweeds

Potamogeton ochreatus — blunt pondweed

Key features

Leaves alternately arranged
Leaves with flat margin and a blunt tip
Main vein inconspicuous, leaves uniform green or bronze

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of pondweeds

Potamogeton cheesemanii red pondweed

Key features

Leaves alternately arranged
Submerged leaves broad often with a wavy margin, pale browny-green, almost translucent, with a conspicuous petiole
Floating leaves usually present, often brown coloured

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of submerged weeds

Potamogeton perfoliatus

clasped pondweed

http://www.adkinvasives.com/aquatic/PlantID/assets/images/heartleaf.jpg

Identification of submerged weeds

Narrow leaves

P. crispus

Broad leaves

P. perfoliatus

Identification of submerged plants

Potamogeton perfoliatus

Key features

Leaves broad, many veined
Leaves thin translucent, often bronze in colour
Leaves clasping stem

Distribution

Three known South Island sites – eradicated?

Identification of milfoils

Myriophyllum propinquum *M. triphyllum*

Identification of milfoils

Myriophyllum spp.

Key features

Leaves pinnate, arranged in whorls of 3 or 4

M. propinquum

Submerged leaves shortly petiolate with ovate outline, pinnae straight

Submerged leaves usually pale green or brown

M. triphyllum

Submerged leaves sessile with oval outline, pinnae curved

Submerged leaves usually dark green or bronze

Distribution - widespread throughout

Identification of submerged species

Ranunculus trichophyllus water buttercup

Identification of submerged species

Ranunculus trichophyllus

Key features

Leaves alternate, leaves divided many times
Leaves thread-like
Flowers white with yellow centre, 5-petalled

Distribution

Scattered in southern NI and SI

Identification of submerged species

Nitella sp. aff. *cristata* nitella hookeri

Identification of submerged species

Nitella sp. aff. *cristata*

Key features

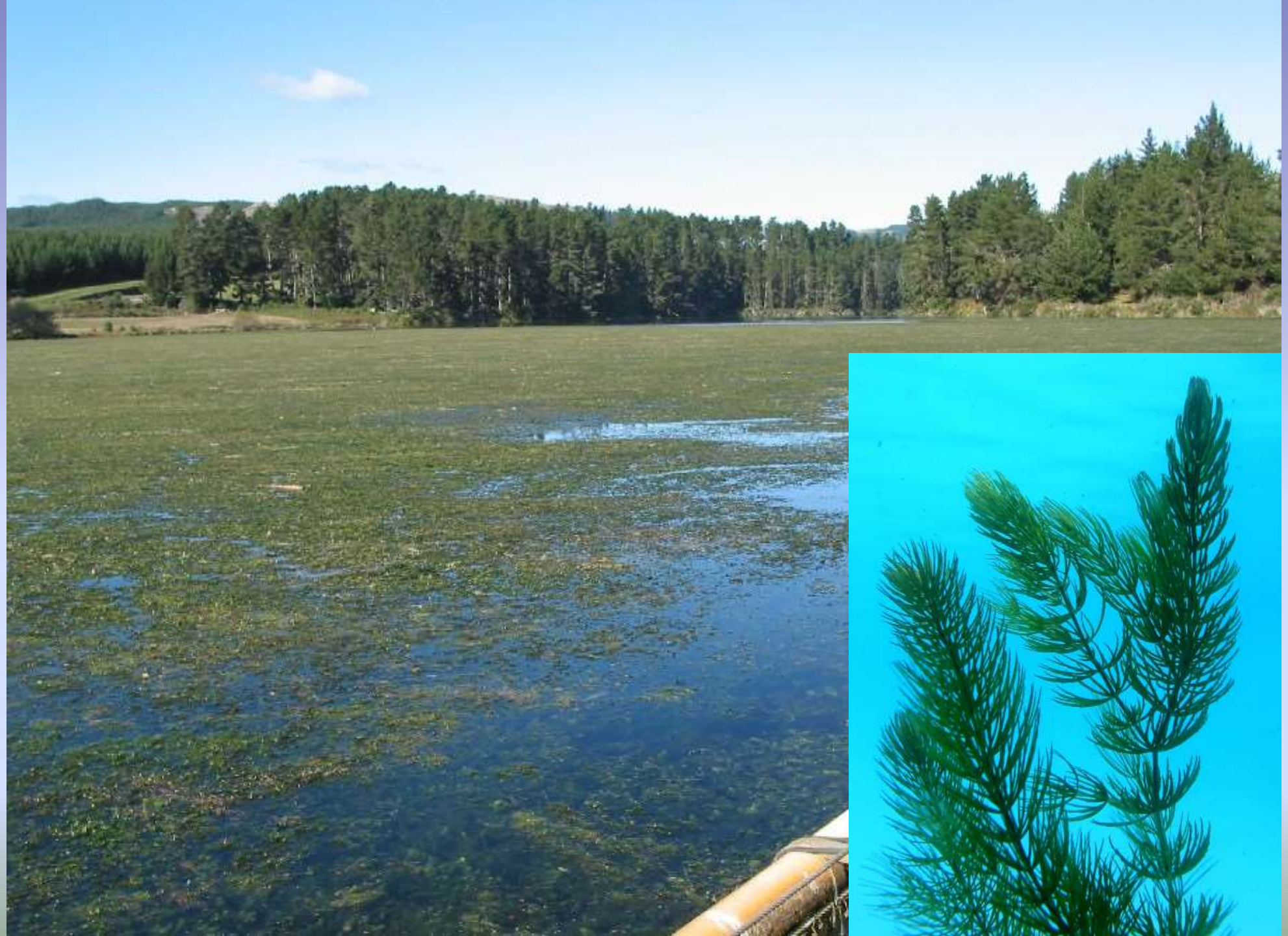
Plants consist of a main axis of single cells, with whorled branches
Whorled cells branched at end
Usually forms dark green or even black dense masses, often shaded by other macrophytes or marginal vegetation

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of submerged plants

Ceratophyllum demersum hornwort



Identification of submerged plants

Ceratophyllum demersum

Key features

Leaves in whorls, leaves forked once or more
Leaves usually stiff with toothed outer margin
Plants do not produce roots

Distribution

Widespread in North Island, eradicated from South Island

Identification of submerged weeds

Cabomba caroliniana

cabomba

Identification of submerged weeds

Cabomba caroliniana

Key features

Leaves in pairs, leaflets spreading like a fan
Floating leaves occur when plant grows to surface
Flowers white, floating, up to 1.5 cm across

Distribution

One naturalised site in Paremuka, Henderson, Auckland

Identification of submerged weeds

Utricularia gibba bladderwort

Waitakere *U. gibba*
1980

Northland *U. gibba*
1999

Identification of submerged weeds

Utricularia gibba

Key features

Plant a dense floating mat, superficially like filamentous algae
Leaves sparsely branched, with attached bladders
Flowers yellow emergent

Distribution

Common in Northland and Auckland, few sites in Waikato, now in Taranaki

Identification of submerged weeds

Vallisneria australis eelgrass

Identification of submerged weeds

Floating/emergent flowers

Sagittaria subulata

S. platyphylla

Identification of submerged plants

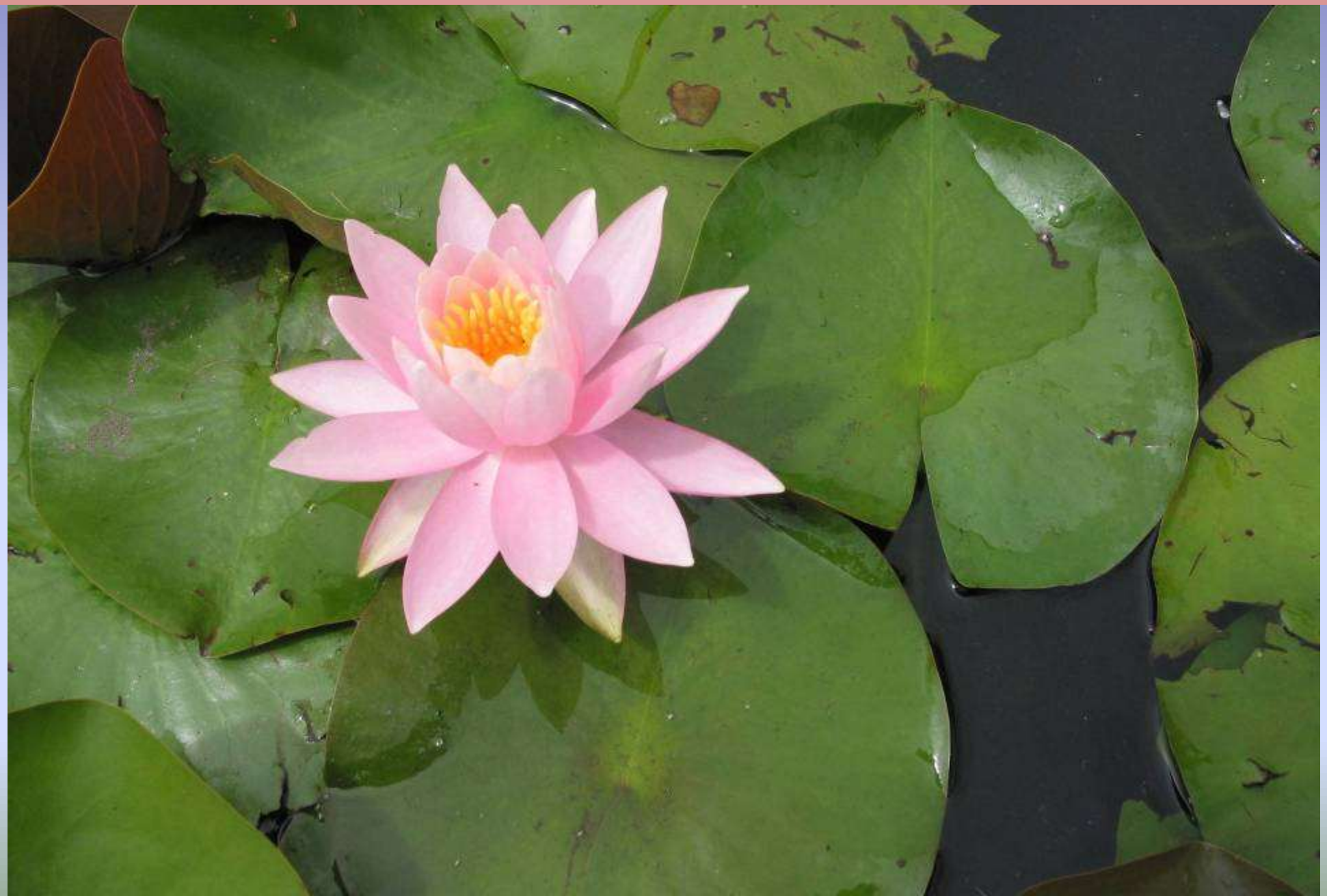
Vallisneria australis

Submerged flowers
Found in Auckland, Waikato, Wanganui, Wellington and Marlborough

Sagittaria spp.

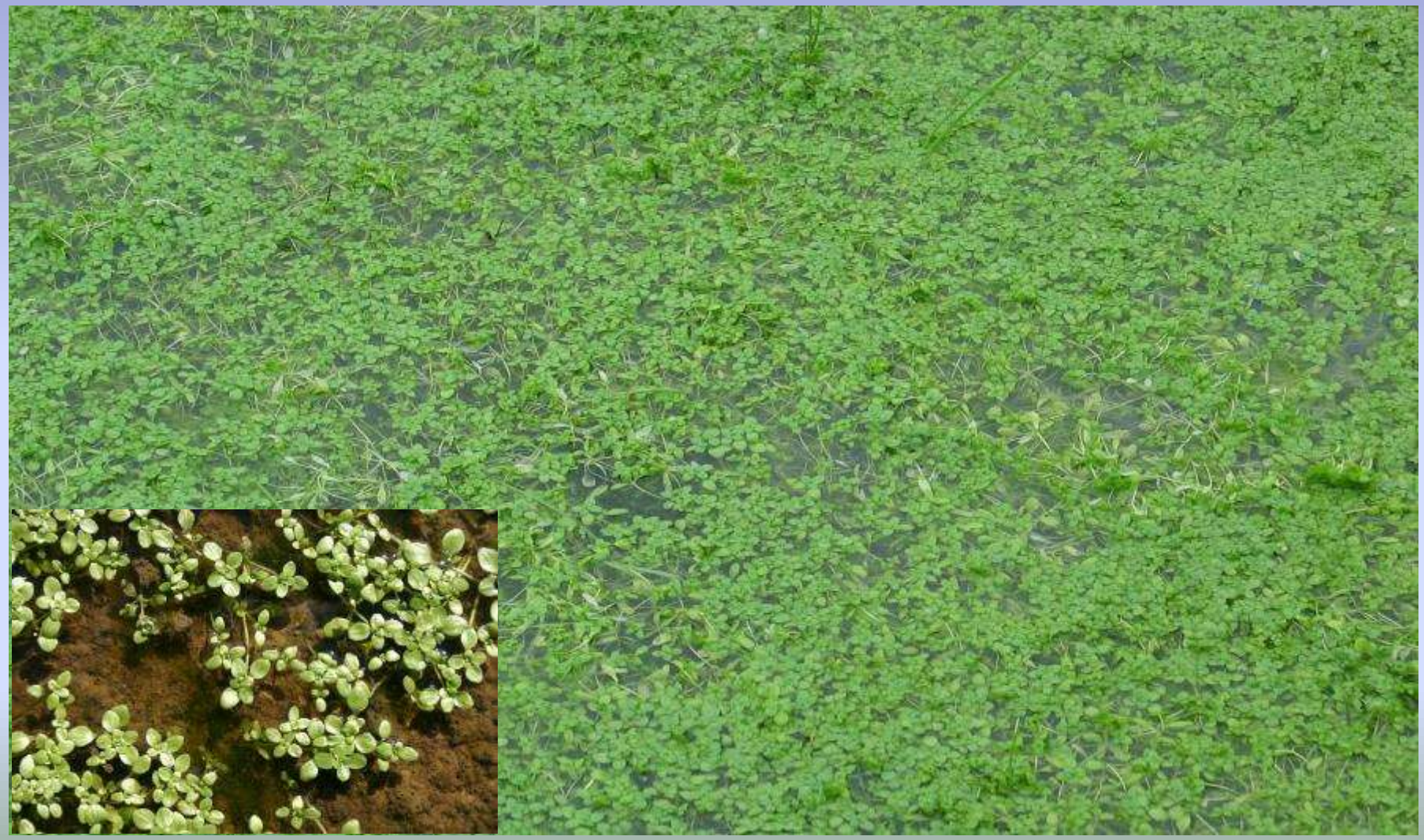
Emergent flowers, tubers (*S. platyphylla*)
Found in Auckland, Waikato and Tasman

Floating leaved species



Identification of floating leaved species

Callitriche stagnalis starwort



Identification of floating leaved species

Callitriche stagnalis

Key features

Floating leaves, pale or light green, in a rosette
Submerged leaves pale, with 3 veins, arranged in pairs
Flowers tiny, in axils of floating leaves, monoecious

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of floating leaved species

Potamogeton cheesemanii red pondweed

Potamogeton suboblongus

Identification of floating leaved species

Potamogeton cheesemanii

Key features

Floating leaves oval, dull green to brown, up to 25 mm long, leaf tip rounded, 5-11 veins evident each side of main vein
Submerged leaves linear, translucent
Flower heads a dense spike floating or projecting above the surface (cf. *P. suboblongus* – floating leaves with pointed tip and 13-21 veins each side of main vein)

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of floating leaved species

Nymphaea alba white waterlily

Identification of floating leaved species

Nymphaea alba

Key features

Plant with long horizontal rhizomes
Floating leaves ~ circular, up to 20 cm across
Flowers many petaled, white (pink, red, yellow)

Distribution

Throughout, ornamental plantings

Identification of floating leaved plants

Aponogeton distachyos Cape pondweed

Identification of floating leaved plants

Aponogeton distachyos

Key features

Plant tuberous, no rhizomes or stolons
Leaves ≥ 3x longer than wide
Flowers a white, two forked spike, very fragrant

Distribution

Scattered in both islands

Identification of floating leaved plants

Ottelia ovalifolia

swamp lily

Identification of floating leaved plants

Ottelia ovalifolia

Key features

Plant lacking tubers, rhizomes or stolons
Floating leaves ~2x longer than wide
Submerged leaves strap-like
Flowers 3-petaled, white

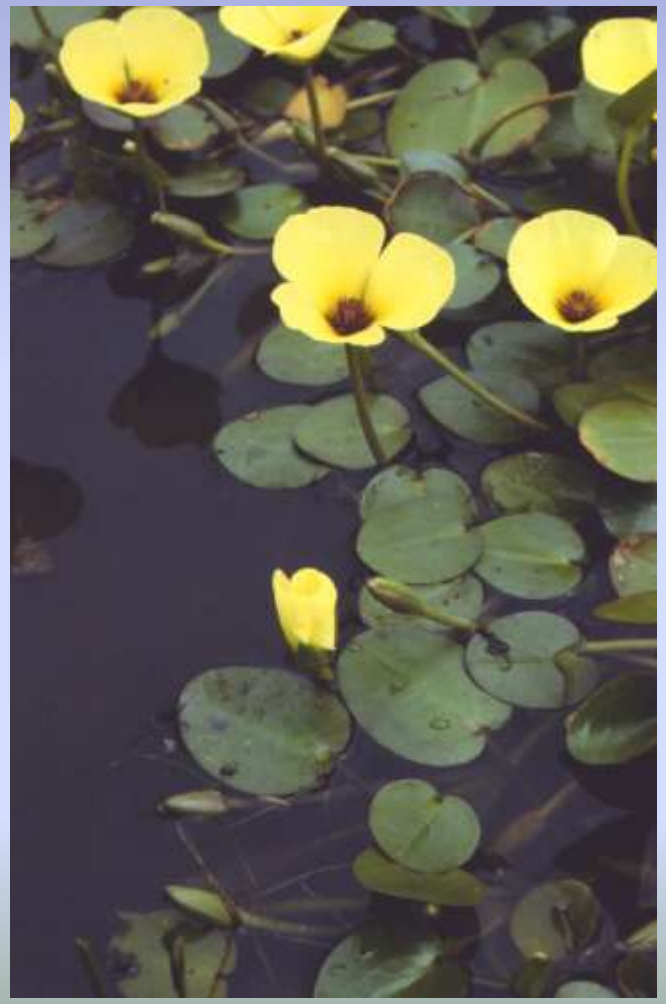
Distribution

Common in coastal North and northern South Islands

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Hydrocleys nymphoides

water poppy



Identification of floating leaved weeds

Hydrocleys nymphoides

Key features

Plant stoloniferous

Leaves longer than wide,
lower main vein inflated

Leaves barely notched

Flowers lemon yellow with purple centre

Distribution

Few sites in Northland, Auckland, Waikato and BOP, nearly eradicated

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nuphar lutea

yellow waterlily

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nuphar lutea

Key features

Plant with massive spongy creeping rhizomes

Leaves longer than wide

Submerged leaves thin ‘lettuce-like’

Flowers yellow, buttercup-like, up to 6 cm across

Distribution

Field sites in Hawkes Bay and Canterbury
Other *Nuphar* occasionally cultivated

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphaea mexicana Mexican waterlily

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphaea mexicana

Key features

Plant with erect rhizomes and fleshy creeping stolons, with banana-like brood bodies

Leaves ~ circular, purple blotched, often scalloped edges, up to 20 cm across

Flowers yellow, many-petalled, up to 15 cm across

Distribution

Scattered field sites in Auckland, Waikato, BOP, mostly unmanaged

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphoides montana (was *N. geminata*) marshwort

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphoides geminata

Key features

Plant with creeping stolons

Leaves ~ circular, lacking distinct main vein beneath, up to 10 cm across

Flowers yellow, 5- petalled with fringe of hairs on margins, up to 4 cm across

Distribution

Few field sites in Auckland, Waikato, BOP, Wellington, Nelson-Marlborough & Canterbury, mostly eradicated

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphoides peltata

fringed waterlily

Identification of floating leaved weeds

Nymphoides peltata

Key features

Plant with creeping stolons

Leaves ~ circular, margin scalloped,
lacking distinct main vein beneath,
up to 10 cm across

Flowers golden yellow, 5- petalled with entire fringe, up to 4 cm across

Distribution

One field site in Auckland, pond sites in Hamilton, eradicated

Erect emergent species

Identification of erect emergent species

Alisma species

water plantains

Alisma lanceolatum

Alisma plantago-aquatica

Identification of erect emergent species

Alisma lanceolatum

Key features

Leaves lanceolate, petiole ‘D’ shaped
Flower heads many-branched, open, much larger than leaves
Flowers 3-petalled, pink
(cf. *A. plantago-aquatica* with pale lilac flowers and wider broad-ovate leaves)

Distribution

Locally common in eastern and southern NI

Identification of erect emergent species

Iris pseudacorus

yellow flag

Identification of erect emergent species

Iris pseudacorus

Key features

Leaves sword-shaped, edges smooth, basal area usually tinged purple
Rhizomes thick, corky, ~ 3 cm diameter
Flowers yellow, typically iris-shaped, produced in spring

Distribution

Widespread

Identification of erect emergent species

Typha orientalis raupo

Identification of erect emergent species

Typha orientalis

Key features

Leaves dull blue-green, grass-like, but edges smooth and leaf spongy, up to 3 m long, 3 cm wide
Flower heads an erect continuous brown sausage-shaped spike (female flowers), up to 20 cm long, 5 cm wide, with a narrower pale (male) spike above

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Lythrum salicaria purple loosestrife



Identification of erect emergent weeds

Lythrum salicaria

Key features

Stems 4 to 6-sided, not mint scented
Leaves opposite, not toothed, sessile with a clasping base
Flowers purple, arranged in a showy terminal spikes

South Island distribution

Scattered, a few sites around Christchurch, especially New Brighton and Tai Tapu, ornamental sites elsewhere. Targeted for eradication.

Identification of erect emergent plants

Sagittaria montevidensis/sagittifolia
arrowhead

S. montevidensis

S. sagittifolia

Sagittaria montevidensis arrowhead

Identification of erect emergent plants

Sagittaria montevidensis

Key features

Leaves arrow-shaped, stems semi-circular
Flowers white with a basal purple dot, in whorls
Plants lack a horizontal rhizome and tubers

Distribution

Two field sites in Auckland, two in Waikato,
ornamental pond sites elsewhere

Identification of erect emergent plants

Sagittaria sagittifolia

Key features

Leaves arrow-shaped, stems triangular
Flowers lacking in New Zealand
Plants with a horizontal rhizome and tubers

Distribution

One field sites in Coromandel, cultivated elsewhere

Identification of erect emergent plants

Sagittaria platyphylla sagittaria

Identification of erect emergent plants

Sagittaria platyphylla

Key features

Leaves lance-shaped, stems triangular
Flowers white, on stalks ± leaves
Plants with a horizontal rhizome and tubers

Distribution

Few field sites in Auckland and Waikato,
ornamental pond sites elsewhere

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Phragmites australis phragmites

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Phragmites australis

Key features

Tall bamboo like grass, up to 3 m tall
Thick far-reaching rhizomes
Leaf lacking a petiole, often aligning in one direction
Flower head purple, silky to 40 cm long

South Island distribution

Scattered, a few sites around Christchurch (Bexley, Hagley Park) and Ashburton, under national eradication programme.

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Phragmites karka

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Phragmites karka

Key features

Tall bamboo like grass, up to 6 m tall
Perennial
Thick far-reaching rhizomes
Leaf lacking a petiole
Flower head purple, silky to 40 cm long
Very similar to *Arundo donax*, more upright

Distribution

Auckland and Manawatu

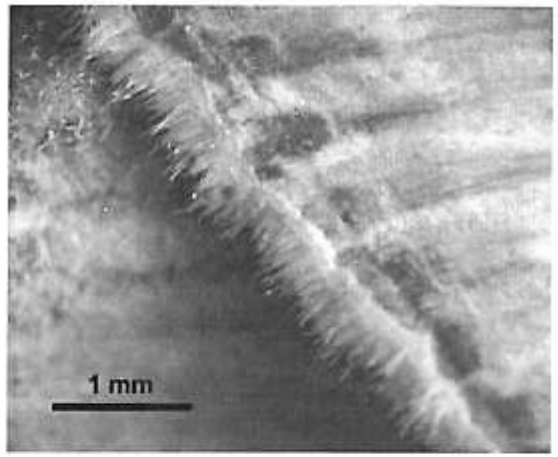


Fig. 4. Ligule of *Phragmites karka*, Tahapa East Reserve, 5 June 2011. Photo: Mike Wilcox.

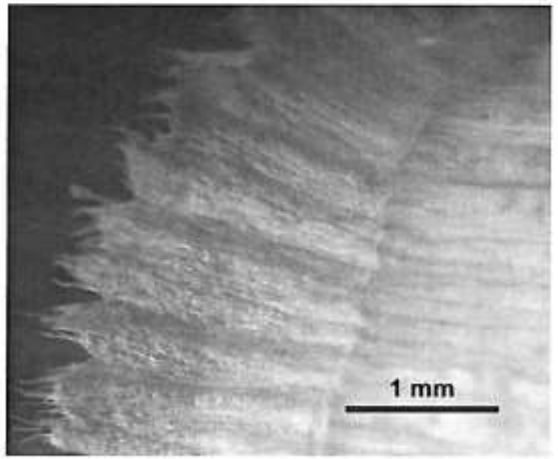


Fig. 5. Ligule of *Arundo donax*, Monarch Reserve, Hillcrest, Auckland, 13 July 2011. Photo: Mike Wilcox.

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Arundo donax

giant reed

Identification of grass-leaved plants

Arundo donax

Key features

Tall bamboo like grass,
up to 6 m tall. Often variegated
Thick far-reaching
rhizomes
Leaf lacking a petiole

Distribution

Throughout, commonest in north

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Phragmites australis

Arundo donax

Very hard to distinguish vegetatively, both are on NPPA

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Bamboo – *Pseudosasa japonica* (was *Arundinaria japonica*)

Note petiole

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Zizania latifolia Manchurian wild rice

Identification of erect emergent weeds

Zizania latifolia

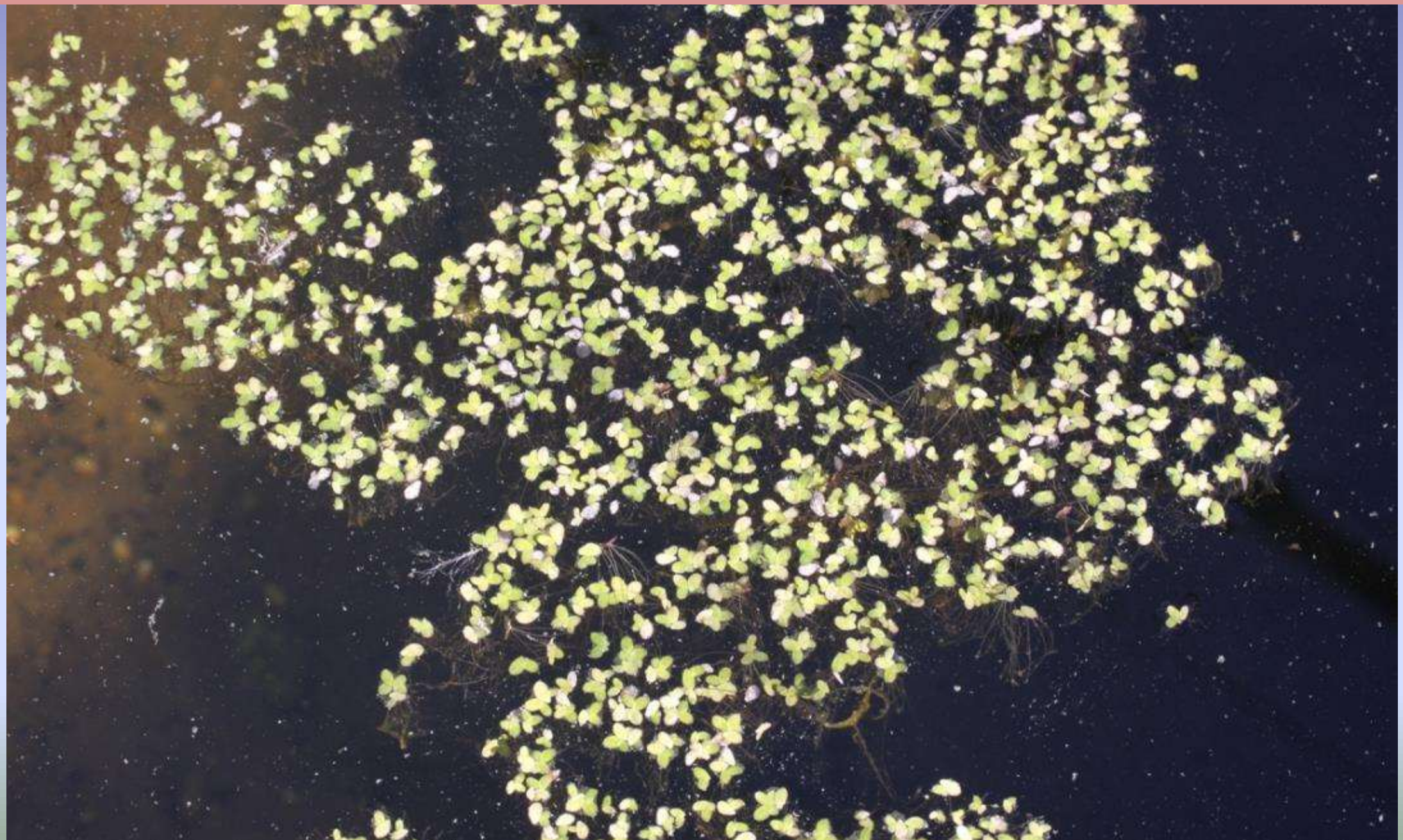
Key features

Tall leafy grass, up to 4 m tall
Thick far-reaching rhizomes
Leaves basal up to 2 cm wide, with a long (4 cm) membranous ligule
Flower head large, reddish when young, male above female flowers

Distribution

Widespread in Kaipara, also rare elsewhere in Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Waikanae

Free-floating species



Identification of free-floating species

Azolla rubra	azolla

Identification of free-floating species

Azolla rubra

Key features

Plant with red or green scale - like leaves
Plant oval or elliptic with irregular branches
Root hairs absent
(cf. *A. pinnata*; triangular, regular branching, root hairs present – not known from Hawkes Bay?)

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of free-floating species

Azolla pinnata ferny azolla

A. rubra

A. pinnata

Identification of floating ferns

Azolla pinnata

Key features

Plant with red or green scale –like leaves
Regular branches like a Norfolk pine branch
Root hairs present

Distribution

Abundant from Northland south to Waikato/BOP,
rare further south to Wellington Region

Identification of free-floating species

Duckweeds

Wolffia australiana

Landoltia punctata
(was *Spirodela punctata*)

Lemna disperma (was *L. minor*)

Identification of free-floating species

Duckweeds

Key features

Landoltia punctata

Several roots per plate, often red-purple underside

Plate oval to 5 mm long, 1.5 to 3 x as long as wide

Lemna disperma

One root per plate, not red-purple underside, but occasionally pale red

Plate oval to 4 mm long, 1 to 2 x as long as wide

Wolffia australiana

Roots absent, with pale deep keel on underside

Plate oval to 1.3 mm long, 1.3 to 2 x as long as wide

All common in NI

Identification of free-floating weeds

Salvinia molesta

salvinia

Identification of free-floating weeds

Salvinia molesta

Key features

Plant with paired leaves, either flat on water surface or folded
Hairs like egg-beaters
Sporangia like string of beads

Distribution

Most sites north of Waikato, mostly eradicated

Identification of free-floating weeds

Eichhornia crassipes water hyacinth

Identification of free-floating weeds

Eichhornia crassipes

Key features

Plant stoloniferous often with daughter plants
Petiole inflated
Flowers showy, pale blue with yellow eye

Distribution

Most sites north of Waikato, mostly eradicated

Identification of free-floating weeds

Pistia stratiotes

water lettuce

Identification of free-floating weeds

Pistia stratiotes

Key features

Plant stoloniferous often with daughter plants
Leaves densely hairy
Flowers green, like a miniature arum flower

Distribution

Two known sites, now eradicated

Sprawling emergent species

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Ludwigia palustris water purslane

Ludwigia palustris and *Juncus articulatus* (jointed rush)

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Ludwigia palustris

Key features

Leaves opposite, ovate
Leaves bright green, but can be bronze or bright red when submerged
Flowers green, in leaf axils

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Erythranthe (was *Mimulus*) *guttata* monkey musk

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Erythranthe guttata

Key features

Leaves opposite, orbicular
Leaves bright green, corrugated, hairless or sparsely hairy (cf. *E. moschata* densely sticky hairy)
Flowers large, yellow with red dots on throat

Distribution

Common throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Veronica spp.

water speedwell

V. anagallis-aquatica

V. catenata

V. americana

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Veronica spp.

Key features

Leaves opposite

V. anagallis-aquatica

Leaves sessile, flower heads paired, flowers bluish mauve

V. catenata

Leaves sessile, flower heads paired, flowers pink

V. americana

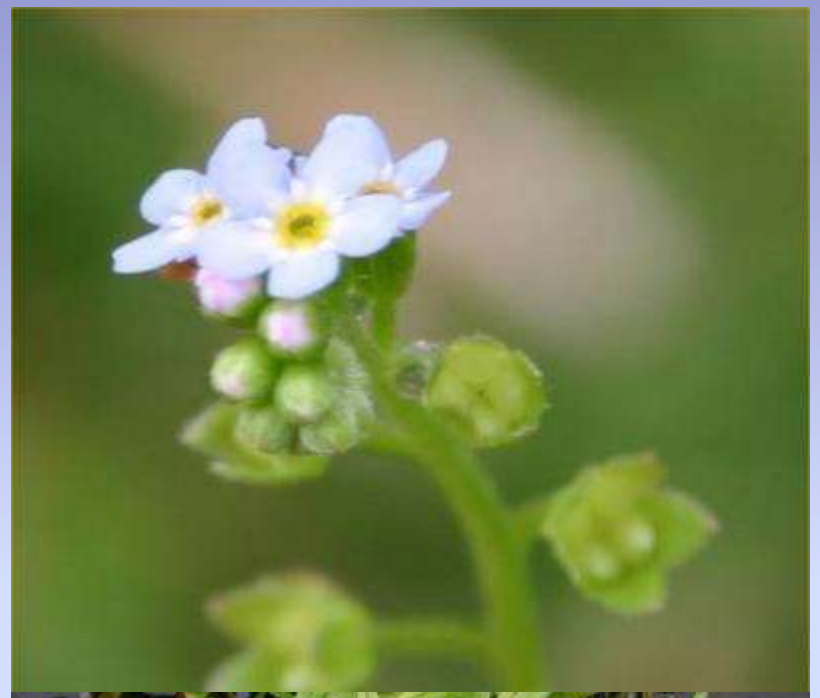
Leaves short-petiolate, serrate, flower heads paired, flowers blue

Distribution

V. anagallis-aquatica throughout NI and northern SI, *V. americana* more local, *V. catenata* mostly in Canterbury, scattered.

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Myosotis laxa water forget-me-not



Identification of sprawling emergent species

Myosotis laxa

Key features

Leaves alternate, linear, hairy
Flowers 2 to 4 mm across, blue with a yellow and white centre (cf. *M. scorpioides* 5 to 10 mm across)

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent plants

Ludwigia peploides var. *montevidensis* primrose willow

Identification of sprawling emergent plants

Ludwigia peploides

Key features

Plant waxy with glossy leaves
Swollen white floating roots sometimes present
Black stipules at base of leaves
Flowers yellow

Distribution

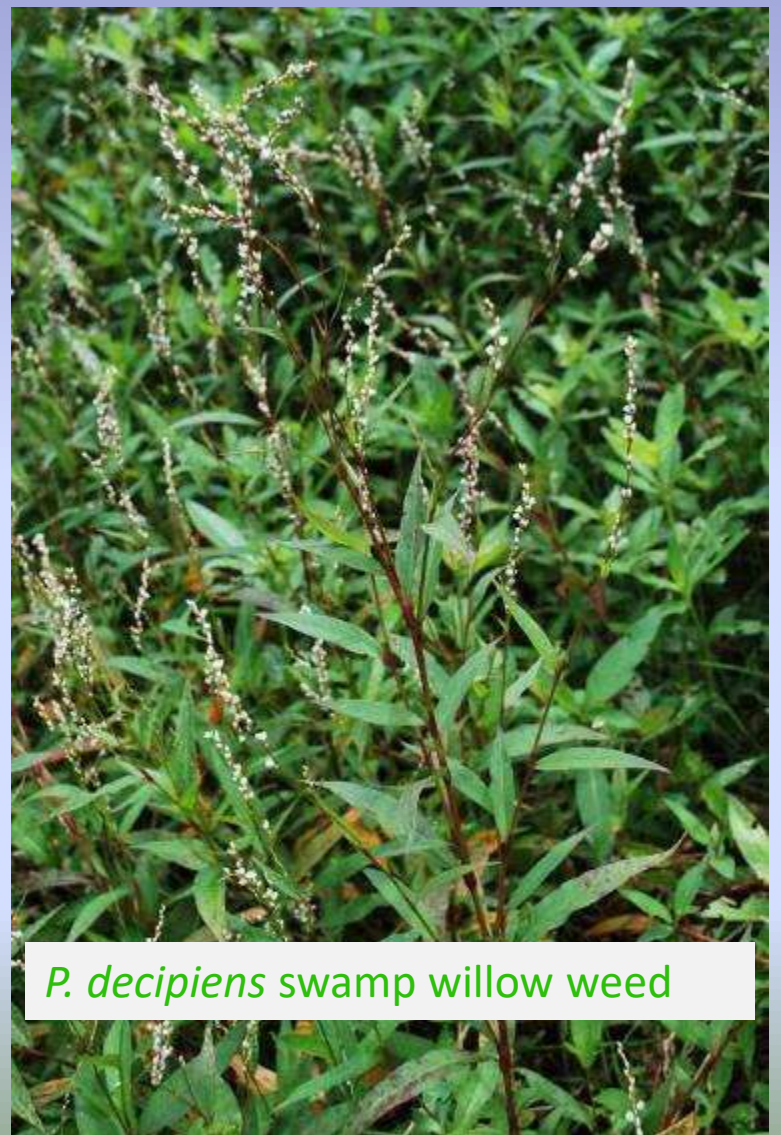
Abundant in Waikato, also in Northland, Auckland and Manawatu

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Persicaria spp.

P. hydropiper water pepper

willow weeds



P. decipiens swamp willow weed

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Persicaria spp.

Key features

Leaves alternate, with ochrea, hairless

P. hydropiper

Leaves bright green, no black dot, margins wavy

Flower heads greenish, drooping, leafy in lower part

P. decipiens

Leaves deep green, sometimes red, black dot often present, margins not wavy

Flower heads pink, more or less erect

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Ranunculus flammula spearwort

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Ranunculus flammula

Key features

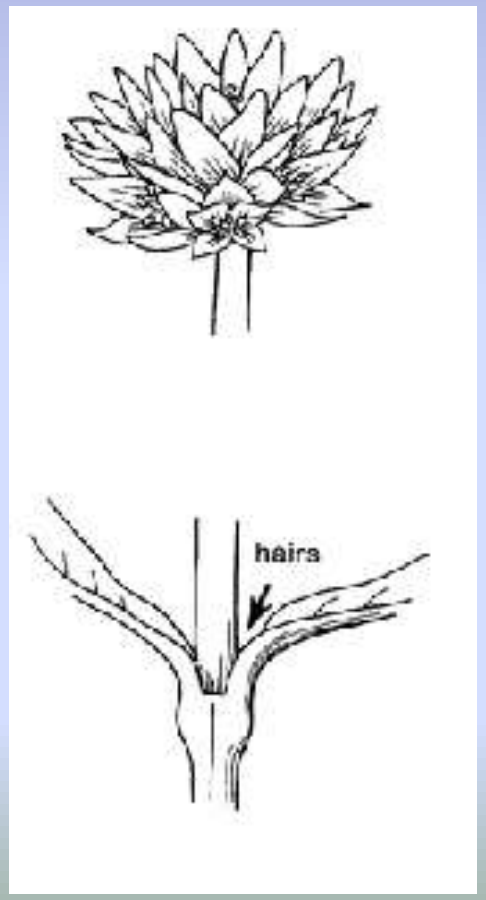
Leaves alternate, lanceolate to ovate, hairless
Flowers 15 to 18 mm across, yellow buttercup-like

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent weeds

Alternanthera philoxeroides alligator weed



Identification of sprawling emergent weeds

Alternanthera philoxeroides

Key features

Plant waxy, stems hollow
Leaves opposite, connate (joined at base) with margin of hairs
Flowers white, clover-like

Northland to Waikato/BOP, Horizons RC. Eradicated from all SI sites

Identification of sprawling emergent weeds

Gymnocoronis spilanthoides Senegal tea

Identification of sprawling emergent weeds

Gymnocoronis spilanthoides

Key features

Stems 6-8 angled
Leaves conspicuously toothed
Flowers white, clover-like, highly scented

Scattered in NI. In SI only known from a wetland on the banks of the Waimakariri River and a pond site in Tasman District, under eradication programmes

Identification of sprawling emergent weeds

Menyanthes trifoliata

bogbean

Key features

Leaves trifoliate

Flowers 5-petalled, pink-white with hairs

Long floating stolons

Distribution

One field site in Canterbury (Racecourse Hill, Darfield), pond site in Queenstown, eradicated?

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Nasturtium officinale/microphyllum

water cress

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Nasturtium spp.

Key features

Leaves alternate, pinnate with 5 to 9 pinnae, peppery when crushed (cf. *Heliosciadium nodiflorum* - carroty smell)

N. officinale

Leaves green throughout year

Flowers white, up to 6 mm across, capsules with two rows of seed, up to 20 mm long

N. microphyllum

Leaves brown during winter

Flowers white, larger than 6 mm across, capsules with one row of seed, up to 30 mm long

Distribution - widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Heliosciadium nodiflorum water celery

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Heliosciadium (was *Apium*) *nodiflorum*

Key features

Leaves alternate, pinnate with 2 to 8 pairs of toothed leaflets
Leaves glossy, with distinctive carrot or celery smell when crushed (cf. *Nasturtium* spp. that are peppery)
Flowers white, in umbels produced from leaf axils

Distribution

Widespread in NI

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Oenanthe javanica

Vietnemese parsley

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Oenanthe javanica

Key features

Leaves alternate, bipinnate with toothed leaflets
Leaves glossy, with distinctive carrot or celery smell when crushed
Flowers white, on stalked umbels

Distribution

Near Levin in NI, Nelson, Tasman and Canterbury in SI

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Oenanthe species

horsebanes

Oenanthe aquatica

Oenanthe sarmentosa

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Oenanthe spp.

Key features

Oenanthe aquatica horsebane

Leaves 2-4 pinnate, divided linear submerged leaves
Flower heads in umbels
Toxic, found in Marlborough

Oenanthe sarmentosa American horsebane

Leaves bi- tripinnate
Flower heads in umbels
Toxic, found near Greymouth

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Myriophyllum aquaticum parrot's feather

M. aquaticum *M. robustum*

Identification of sprawling emergent species

Myriophyllum aquaticum

Key features

Leaves pinnate in whorls of > 4, pale blue-green
Leaves rounded at tip (cf. *M. robustum* – rare sp.)
Flowers white, inconspicuous in leaf axils

Distribution

Becoming widespread

Identification of sprawling emergent plants

Myriophyllum variifolium

Leaves in whorls of 5-6, either pinnate or linear

Few sites in gardens, field site on Maramarua River, N. Waikato

Identification of sprawling emergent plants

Similar plants

M. variifolium *M. propinquum*

Myriophyllum propinquum

Key features

Leaves in whorls of 3-4

Emergent leaves usually coarsely pinnate, occasionally entire

Distribution

Native plant found throughout NZ

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Glyceria maxima reed sweet grass, poa aquatica

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Glyceria maxima

Key features

Tall grass with leaves up to 60 cm long, 2 cm wide
Leaf tip with boat-keel like tip
Leaf sheath with cross veins
Flower heads large, many branched

Distribution

Widespread

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Glyceria fluitans/declinata

floating sweet grass

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Glyceria declinata/fluitans

Key features

Sprawling grass with leaves up to 20 cm long, 7 mm wide, often floating on the water surface
Leaf tip with boat-keel like tip
Leaf sheath with cross veins
Flower heads narrow, few branches
Species distinguished on floral characters (see key)

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Agrostis stolonifera creeping bent

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Agrostis stolonifera

Key features

Sprawling, mat forming grass with obvious stolons
Leaves up to 20 cm long, 5 mm wide
Leaf tip acute, leaf sheath without cross veins
Flower heads open, many branched, contracting when mature

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Alopecurus geniculatus kneed foxtail

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Alopecurus geniculatus

Key features

Sprawling grass, with obvious knee-like bends at each node, sometimes floating on the water surface
Leaves up to 12 cm long, 7 mm wide
Leaf tip acute, leaf sheath without cross veins
Flower heads a dense spike, up to 7 cm long, 5 mm wide

Distribution

Widespread throughout

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Paspalum distichum Mercer grass

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Paspalum distichum

Key features

Sprawling grass, with obvious stolons and leaf blades distantly arranged
Leaves up to 10 cm long, 6 mm wide, hairy near base
Flower heads of two narrow spikes, each up to 5 cm long

Distribution

Widespread especially in warmer parts

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Phalaris arundinacea reed canary grass

Identification of sprawling emergent grasses

Phalaris arundinacea

Key features

Robust, coarse, rhizomatous grass forming dense tall swards up to 2 m tall
Stems bamboo-like
Flower heads open heads at first, narrowing when mature, lobed, purple or cream coloured

Distribution

Scattered, locally abundant