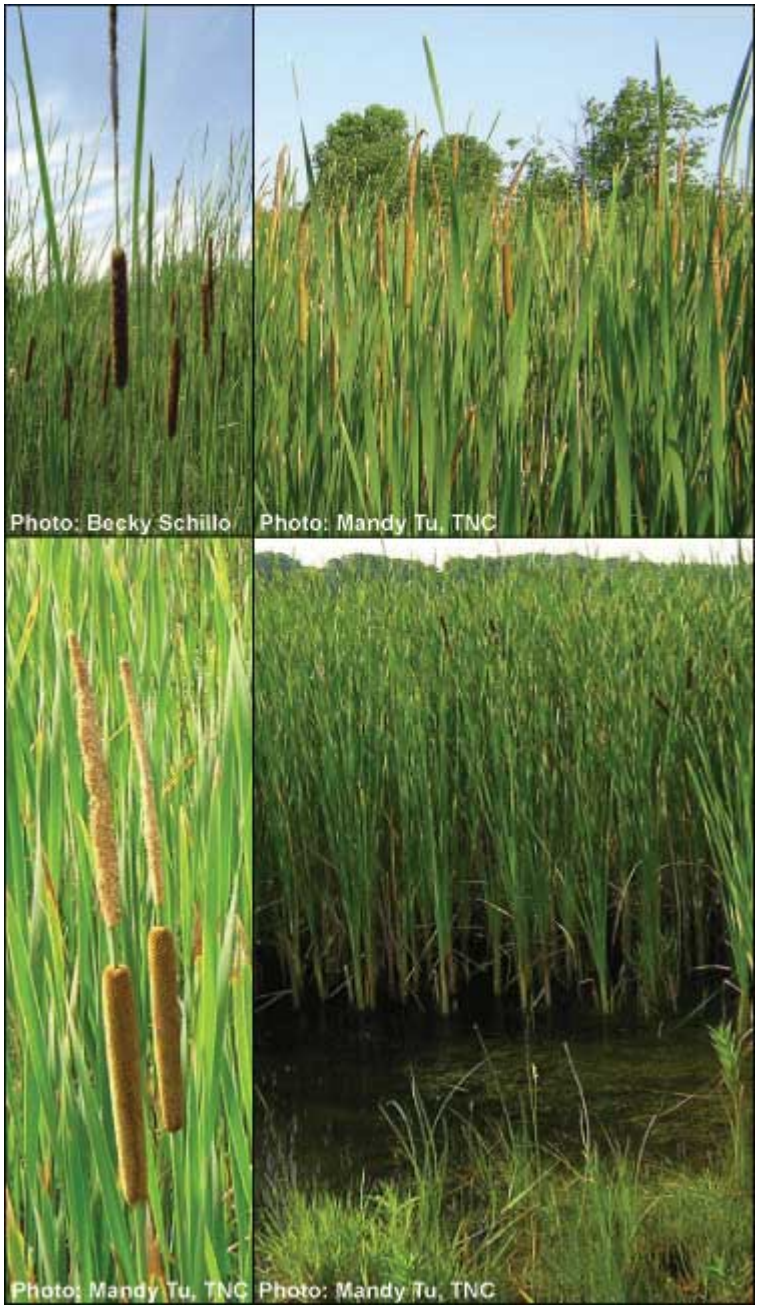
MISIN Midwest Invasive Species Information Network

Narrow-leaved cat-tail

Typha angustifolia



Description

Narrow-leaved cat-tail hybridizes with the native cat-tail to produce the sterile Typha xglauca, which reproduces vegetatively and tolerates a greater range of conditions than parents; cattail-dominated habitat in the Midwest has increased dramatically over the past few decades as <I>T. angustifolia</I> and <I>T. xglauca</I> have spread.

Habit

Aquatic; emergent perennial; 1.2-3.7 m (4-12 ft) tall.

Leaves

Upright, flat, up to 1 m (3 ft) long and 0.6-1.25 cm (0.25-0.5 in) wide with parallel veins, dark green in color.

Stems

Upright; 1-2 m (3-6 ft) long.

Flowers

Source: MISIN. 2024. Midwest Invasive Species Information Network. Michigan State University - Applied Spatial Ecology and Technical Services Laboratory. Available online at https://www.misin.msu.edu/facts/detail.php?id=31.

Borne in dense, dark brown, terminal spikes; separate male and female clusters, male flowers are 2.0-10 cm (0.75-4 in) above the female flowers, male portion 7-20 cm (3-8 in) long and 7-15 mm wide, female portion 10-20 cm (4-8 in) long and 1-2 cm wide.

Fruits and Seeds

Numerous, tiny, wind-dispersed seeds, up to 250000 seeds per plant, viable in the seed bank for up to 100 years.

Habitat

Native to Eurasia. Found in wetlands, ditches, stream and lake shores and wet depressions; tolerates high levels of silt, nutrients and salt.

Reproduction

By seed with establishment on bare soil and vegetatively by thick spreading rhizomes; also by fragmentation.

Similar

Common cat-tail (Typha latifolia) does not have a gap between male and female portions of flower head, leaves are wider at 1.0-2.0 cm (0.4-0.8 in).

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Eliminating narrow-leaved cat-tail is impractical but all cat-tail species may become invasive and may be controlled. Aerial photos are useful in assessment. Where water level manipulation is possible, cut or burn stems just before flowering to cut off oxygen to roots and flood to at least 1 m (3 ft); higher water levels encourage muskrats; foliar herbicide also effective, particularly when followed by cutting and flooding; prescribed fire ineffective without herbicide or flooding. Permits are usually required for

herbicide use in water bodies and wetlands. For information see MDEQs Aquatic Nuisance Control website at: https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3313_3681_3710---,00.html

Credits

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) has partnered with MISIN to provide the information in this fact sheet. Species images and/or information were used with permission from "A Field Identification Guide to Invasive Plants in Michigan's Natural Communities" and "A Field Guide to Invasive Plants of Aquatic and Wetland Habitats for Michigan.