

# MISIN Midwest Invasive Species Information Network

## Indian swampweed

Hygrophila polysperma

### Description

This species is listed on the Federal Noxious Weed list. Square stems may aid in identification.

### Habit

Herbaceous perennial, rooted, dicot, primarily aquatic. Rare terrestrial form in moist soils.

### Leaves

Opposite, sparsely hairy, elliptic to oblong, up to 6 cm (1.5 in) long and 2 cm (0.5 in) wide, variable colors; light green to brown to reddish.

#### Stems

Creeping ascendant (rarely erect); up to 6ft in length or longer; upper most emersed stems may be squarish; brittle and easily break into fragments.

#### Flowers

Small, 3/8 in long; solitary; no stalks; found in leaf axils in the upper parts of the immersed stems; bluish-white to white petals; hairy; two "lips",





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upper lip 2-lobed, lower lip 3-lobed; calyx is hairy with 5 equal lobes; blooms October through March.

### Fruits and Seeds

Narrow capsule 6-7 mm long; 20-30 tiny flattened-round seeds.

### Habitat

Native to India. Found in lakes, streams and rivers, still and moving water, up to 3 m (10 ft) in depth. Grows from bottom to water surface.

### Reproduction

Vegetatively, by small stem and leaf fragments, possibly by seed; spread by mechanical harvesters, boats and water currents.

### Similar

Alligatorweed (Alternanthera philoxeroides) has large, white, papery flowers.

### Monitoring and Rapid Response

Difficult to control, only herbicide known to work contains the ingredient, endothall.

### Credits

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