

Brittleleaf naiad

Najas minor

Description

First reported in the United States in the Hudson River in 1934. There was an intentional introduction into the Cayuga Lake, NY in 1935. Reasons for its introduction are unknown but it was encouraged as food for waterfowl in the 1930s.

Habit

Herbaceous, rooted, aquatic annual, brittle; forms dense, bushy, stands.

Leaves

Dark green in color, opposite, about 3.5 cm (1 in) long and very narrow with 7-15 teeth on each side, distinctive serrate basal lobes.

Stems

Reach 1.2 (4 ft) in length; profusely branched near apex; brittle.

Flowers

1-2 per axil, staminate and pistillate on same



Source: Don Cameron, MNAP, VLMP © 2007

plant, very tiny.

Fruits and Seeds

Small, 1.5-3.0 mm, develop in the leaf axils.

Fruits are slightly curved and have white ladderlike longitudinal rows.

Habitat

Native to Eurasia and Africa. Found in ponds, lakes and slow-moving waters; in depths of up to 4.5 m (15 ft).

Reproduction

By abundant seeds which are eaten by waterfowl; fragments dispersed by boats and currents.

Similar

Coon's Tail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) has whorled leaves; its spiny leaf margins and basal lobes, which are visible without a hand lens.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Hand-pulling or cutting for small infestations.

Credits

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