

Starry stonewort

Nitellopsis obtusa

Description

This species is listed on the Michigan prohibited aquatic plant list. Appears in July and increases through October.

Habit

Aquatic macroalga with smooth, irregular branches; rootlike rhizoids. Forms dense mats that cover lake bottoms.

Leaves

Whorls of 5-8 fine, uneven-length branches arise at an acute angle from nodes. Contents can be squeezed out of tube-like cell wall when cut; dark reddish gametangia.

Stems

May reach 80 cm (33 in) in length.

Flowers



Lacks true flowers. Cream colored bulbs form at the base of each cluster of branches.

Fruits and Seeds

Habitat

Native to Europe and Asia. Found in still or slow moving waters; grows at depths ranging from 1 m (39 in) to 30 m (~93 ft).

Reproduction

Probably introduced in ballast water. Dispersed by boats, waterfowl.

Similar

Common stonewort (*Chara vulgaris*), which feels brittle and scaly, unlike the starry stonewort.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Algaecides and mechanical harvesting.

Credits

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