

Eurasian Watermilfoil

Myriophyllum spicatum

The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board listed Eurasian watermilfoil as a Class B noxious weed in 1988. It was introduced as an ornamental and is now wide spread throughout Washington. It is native to Europe, Asia and Northern Africa. It has not yet been identified in Asotin County.

Infestations of this weed can alter aquatic ecosystems. It forms dense mats that shade out other aquatic plants, degrades water quality, inhibits water flow and impacts recreational activities.

Eurasian watermilfoil is a perennial, submersed, aquatic plant with dissected leaves. It forms dense mats with flowering stems extending above the water's surface. Flowers are tiny, pinkish and occur on reddish spikes. Male and female flowers are on the same plant. Leaves are finely dissected and occur in whorls of 4 (in rare cases 5). Each leaf has 12 or more leaflet pairs. Sometimes down to 5 pairs of leaflets. Leaves have a feather-like appearance. Stem tips are tassel-like and often red. They mostly branch near the water's surface. Stems easily fragment. Eurasian watermilfoil spreads mainly by stem fragments. The seeds detach from the plant, float and then eventually sink. It is highly adaptable and is found in streams, ponds, lakes and ditches.



Photograph by Jane Alden Stevens
Courtesy of the Lake George Association.

Girl swimming in milfoil.

