



Curlyleaf Pondweed



leaves



turion



stem

Curlyleaf Pondweed

Genus: Potamogeton

Species: crispus

Priority Listing: 1B

Aquatic

Curlyleaf pondweed is native to Africa, Eurasia, and Australia.

Curlyleaf pondweed was introduced into the United States in the early 1900's by hobbyists who used this plant in aquariums and then dumped the contents of the aquariums into bodies of water.

Curlyleaf pondweed creates dense mats of vegetation in water bodies that die off and create large amounts of floating waste that can be dangerous to swimmers and boaters. Curlyleaf pondweed is very hardy due to its extensive and dense root system providing the plant with the capability to survive extreme conditions. It has been found growing under snow and ice!

Curlyleaf pondweed resembles other species of Potamogeton, except curlyleaf pondweed is the only species with curly edged leaves that resemble lasagna noodles. The stem of this plant is four-angled,

has few branches, and can grow to 31" long and is less than 1/8" wide. Leaves are oblong, 2" to 3" long, and are blue-green in color. Curlyleaf pondweed produces a flower spike measuring less than 7/8" and usually has up to 10 flowers per spike. The flowers are cream to brown in color. When this plant flowers, the spike grows above the water's surface and blooms.

This plant reproduces by seeds and root buds called, turions. **Turions** break off from the parent plant and are carried downstream, where they establish new infestations.

There are several species of native pondweed in Montana and it's often difficult to tell what's native and what's not. Native species of pondweed have veins that run parallel, whereas **invasive** curlyleaf has veins that branch from a mid-vein in a perpendicular pattern.



Photo courtesy of Chris Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, Bugwood.org

Aquatic: living or growing on, in, or near the water

Invasive: marked by the tendency to spread or intrude

Turion: winter buds of aquatic species