

Curly-leaved Pondweed

Potamogeton crispus



What is it and Why is it a Problem?

Curly-leaved Pondweed is a submerged aquatic plant that forms dense mats in ponds, lakes, rivers, streams and canals which overcrowd native plant species, reduce sunlight penetration and decrease dissolved oxygen content in the water. It also disrupts water flow, creates stagnant water which is preferred by mosquitoes, and interferes with recreational activities such as swimming, fishing and boating.



What Does it Look Like?

- Leaves are submerged, alternately arranged (spiral-like around the stem), oblong, light to dark green in colour, somewhat translucent, 0.5 - 1.5 cm wide, 3 - 10 cm long, and have wavy, finely and sharply toothed margins
- Flowers are small, red-brown in colour, have 4 petal-like lobes, are arranged in a

dense spike borne, and stick up out of the water on a 2.5 - 5 cm long stalk

- Stems are branched, flattened and can grow more than 1 m long in deep water
- Looks similar to native Richardson's Pondweed and Large-leaf Pondweed but can be differentiated by its alternately arranged leaves and finely serrated margins



How Can it be Managed?

- Report sightings of any invasive species online through [EDDMapS Ontario](#), a web-based mapping system which also has an app, or through the [Invasive Species in Ontario](#) project on [iNaturalist.org](#).
- Learn how to identify it so you can avoid accidentally spreading it with your fishing gear and equipment. Inspect your boat, trailer and fishing gear before leaving a

- fishing spot and before heading to a new fishing spot to remove any mud and plant fragments. Refer to the [OMNRF's Boater's Action Plan](#) for more information on cleaning your boat and gear.
- Avoid boating near known Curly-leaved Pondweed infestations and reduce your speed. Propellers can cut off pieces of the plant and spread them to new areas.
- If you are considering removing Curly-leaved pondweed through pulling or raking, ensure you follow [OMNRF's rules](#) regarding removal - the beds of most water bodies in Ontario are Crown Land and most work needs a permit.
- Do not buy, sell or plant Curly-leaved Pondweed for water garden or pond use. You can refer to the [Grow me instead: Guide to Planting Native Plants in Southern Ontario](#) to determine what native aquatic plants to use instead. Oftentimes invasive aquatic plants end up reaching water bodies when people dispose of their unwanted aquarium or water garden plants. The correct way to dispose of unwanted aquatic plants is to donate them or throw them in the garbage.



Robert H. Mohlenbrock, USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

References

[Curly Leaf Pondweed Fact Sheet](#), produced by the Alberta Invasive Species Council

[Great Lakes Nonindigenous Species Information System](#), produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Grow Me Instead \(Southern Ontario\) Brochure](#), produced by the Ontario Invasive Plant Council

[Invasive Aquatic Plant Species: A Quick Reference Guide](#), produced by Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program and Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

[Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program](#), developed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH).

