

Native  
Aquatic  
Submerged  
Plant

# WILD CELERY

*Vallisneria americana*



## About

Large masses of Wild Celery have been described as underwater meadows, supporting entire ecosystems! This species is a submerged macrophyte that prefers clear, shallow waters. You'll find Wild Celery in lakes, rivers and springs. It is common to spot Wild Celery growing in sites where other species are typically unable to grow, due to strong waves or nutrient poor conditions.



## Identification

- Leaves are ribbon-like growing in clusters (1-18 per cluster)
- Leaves reach up to 1 - 3 meters long and 18 mm wide
- Leaves feature a darkened central stripe
- Leaves are flat, thin, have toothed margins and rounded tips
- Leaves vary from green to brownish-red in colour
- Female flowers rise to the water surface with a long, coiled stalk
- Male flowers are hidden at the base of the plant in a small capsule

### References

Photo 1 from Sam Hough via iNaturalist

Photo 2 from Ron Vanderhoff via iNaturalist

Photo 3 from Liana Kirkey via iNaturalist

Tapegrass, Eelgrass or Wild Celery by M. Tootoonchi, L.A. Gettys and J.H. Bhadha (University of Florida)

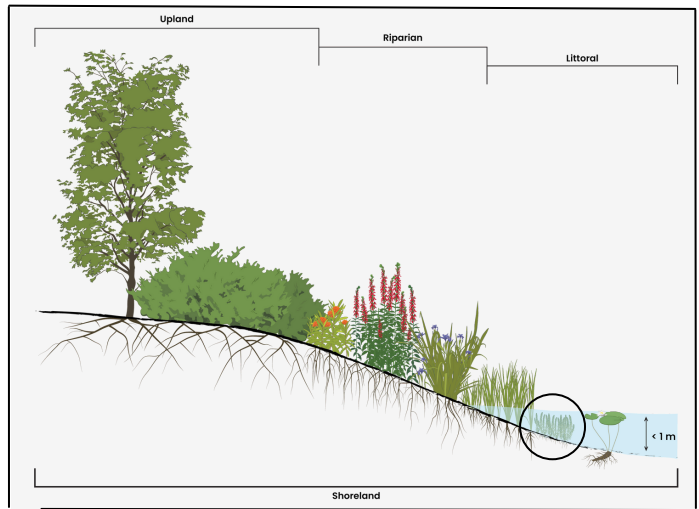
Water Soldier developed by the Government of Ontario

Water Soldier by Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program

The biology of Canadian weeds *Vallisneria americana* developed by P.M. Catling, K.W. Spicer, M. Biernacki and J. Lovett Doust

# Where is this species found in the shoreland?

*Vallisneria americana* is found in the littoral zone of the shoreland, as shown in the diagram. It thrives in water 30 - 120 cm deep.



**Did you know** that *Vallisneria americana* has many interchangeable common names? It is widely referred to as Wild Celery, Tapegrass and eelgrass!



## Benefits

- Food source for fish, invertebrates, waterfowl and mammals (even moose!)
- Provides habitat for fish and benthic invertebrates
- Maintains water temperatures by creating shade
- Provides water clarity by stabilizing sediments
- Improves water quality by capturing excess nutrients and absorbing heavy metals
  - Often used in restoration projects



## Don't weed me!

Wild Celery is commonly misidentified as a shoreland weed, like many submerged aquatic plants. It is important to distinguish native plants from true weeds, like invasive species. Water Soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) is an invasive look-alike that should be managed and reported if spotted. Water Soldier is a submergent aquatic plant that is buoyant during the summer months, and waterlogged as the leaves mature. It is easily distinguished by its serrated leaf edges, which are not present on Wild Celery.