

Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Fact Sheet

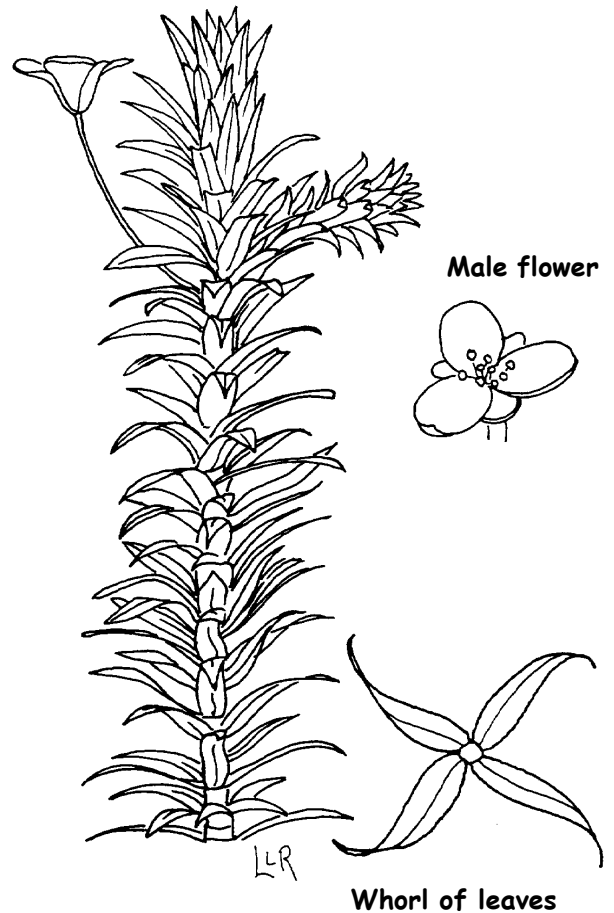
Brazilian elodea *Egeria densa* Planch. Frogbit Family Vermont Class A Noxious Weed

Description: Brazilian elodea is a submersed, rooted, aquatic perennial with round stems that can grow in water depths of up to 20 feet (6 meters). Once the plant reaches the water surface it branches profusely, forming buoyant, dense surface mats that are nearly impenetrable. Leaves are arranged in whorls of 4 around the stem, although whorls of 3 to 5 leaves may also occur. Leaves are oblong to linear in shape, less than 1 inch (2.5 cm) in length, and very finely toothed. Leaves and stems are generally bright green. Stem fragments root and can develop into new shoots. White, three-petaled flowers are produced on threadlike stalks that float or rise above the water's surface. Male and female flowers are produced on separate plants. Female flowers and seed production have not been reported in United States populations. Brazilian elodea overwinters primarily from rootcrowns.

Habitat: In its native range, Brazilian elodea prefers slow-moving, shallow waters that are somewhat acidic and enriched. Outside its native habitat, it inhabits lakes, rivers and springs.

Threats: Brazilian elodea forms dense monotypic stands that outcompete native aquatic vegetation, restrict water movement, trap sediment, cause fluctuations in water quality, and interfere with recreational uses such as swimming, boating and fishing.

Distribution: Native to southeastern South America (southern Brazil, Uruguay, and north and central Argentina), Brazilian elodea's spread from its native habitat has been aided by its popularity as an aquarium plant and a laboratory research specimen. The earliest record of a population in the United States is from Long Island in 1893. Now widespread in the United States, Brazilian elodea can be found sporadically from Massachusetts, New



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Distribution continued: Hampshire and New York; south to Florida; and west to Illinois, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, California, Oregon and Washington. It has not yet been found growing in the wild in Vermont; however it was commonly sold in aquarium stores around the state, although this activity is now illegal.

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Brazilian Elodea

Frogbit Family (*Hydrocharitaceae*)

Control: Many methods have been used to manage Brazilian elodea, including biological control agents, mechanical removal, physical habitat manipulation methods, and herbicides. An integrated approach combining a number of methods may provide for the most effective and successful control.

* No person may use pesticides, biological controls, bottom barriers, structural controls or powered mechanical devices in waters of the state to control nuisance aquatic vegetation, insects or other aquatic life including lamprey unless that person has been issued a permit by the secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources.

References:

- Crow, C.E. and Hellquist C.B. 1982. *Aquatic Vascular Plants of New England: Part 4. Juncaginaceae, Scheuchzeriaceae, Butomaceae, Hydrocharitaceae.* University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire. Agricultural Experiment Station. Station Bulletin 520.
- Getsinger, Kurt D. 1991. *Egeria: Biology and Management in Temperate Lakes.* Aquatics. Vol. 13, No. 4.
- McCann, James A., Lori N. Arkin, and James D. Williams. 1996. *Nonindigenous Aquatic and Selected Terrestrial Species of Florida: Status, Pathway and Time of Introduction, Present Distribution and Significant Ecological and Economic Effects.* National Biological Service.
Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board. February, 1996.



For more information about Vermont's invasive exotic plant species or if you would like to know how you can help, please contact:

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Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, 103 S. Main St., Bldg. 10 South, Waterbury, VT 05671-0601 Tel. 802-241-3678