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## **A Special Exotic Invasive Aquatic Species Detection Alert from MWA**

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**A Special Exotic Invasive Species Detection  
Alert from Michigan Waterfront Alliance**



**Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is a 501(c) 4 non-profit corporation formed over twenty years ago in order to effectively advocate for the creation or preservation of state laws, and/or policies designed to protect, preserve, and promote the sustainable and wise use of our state's immense treasure of high quality freshwater resources. Our primary mission will be accomplished by pro-active participation in Michigan's legislative process (lobbying), by participating in court cases whose outcomes may have significant statewide ramifications, and/or by direct involvement with natural resources management, or environment focused state agencies or departments.**

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Michigan  
Invasive Species Program





# HYDRILLA

## SCIENTIFIC NAME

***HYDRILLA VERTICILLATA***

## Press Release

Monday, October 2, 2023

Contact: [Bill Keiper](#), 517-342-4087,

or [Joanne Foreman](#), 517-284-5814

# First Michigan detection of invasive hydrilla triggers response

## *Aquatic plant found in two West Michigan ponds*

Hydrilla, considered one of the world's most invasive aquatic plants, has been detected for the first time in Michigan. The Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy confirmed two small populations of the plant in adjacent private ponds on residential properties in Berrien Springs in Southwest Michigan.

The small patches of [hydrilla](#) (*Hydrilla verticillata*) were discovered during routine monitoring following treatment for another invasive plant, parrot feather, which was found in the pond in 2020. Both species are [prohibited in Michigan](#), meaning it is unlawful to sell, possess or import them into the state, and both are on Michigan's [invasive species watch list](#) due to their potential environmental threat.

Hydrilla has several ways of reproducing, allowing it to spread rapidly, outcompete native plants and quickly form dense single-species infestations. Root tubers, turions (buds) and even small plant fragments can develop into new plants, making it very easy for hydrilla to disperse through water or attach to ornamental plants sold for water gardens.

“It’s not clear how either plant made its way to this pond, but seeds or fragments of the invasive plants may have been attached to ornamental plants installed in past years,” said Bill Keiper, EGLE aquatic biologist. “Sediment core samples of the pond and genetic analysis of the plant material are planned to help determine how long the hydrilla has been here and where in the U.S. it might have originated.”

EGLE’s immediate response actions include surveying connected ponds, a receiving stream, and the St. Joseph River to ensure the full hydrilla population extent is known. Herbicide treatments are underway in the infested ponds, targeting hydrilla plants to prevent further tuber production this season. A response plan will focus on preventing the spread of hydrilla beyond its current location, with the long-term goal of eradication.

### Why be concerned?

Hydrilla was introduced into Florida in the 1950s and has spread across the southeast. A separate strain was first detected in Delaware in 1976 and has since made its way through

the Atlantic states and several Great Lakes states.

Hydrilla can thrive in both low- and high-quality waters and has been found in lakes, rivers, reservoirs, wetlands, ponds and streams. Plants are generally rooted in sediment in water depths up to 25 feet and remain submerged, with long, leaved stems floating near the surface. Because it outcompetes native plants, it can quickly fill a lake or pond, choking off recreational access.

Though hydrilla can be treated with herbicide, it is difficult to eradicate because tubers and turions can persist in the sediment for years, and plants can reproduce from even small fragments.

## **You can help**

Early detection of hydrilla provides a better opportunity for successful control and eradication. Michigan's Invasive Species Program relies on reports from the public to help in early detection and response efforts.

## **Identify hydrilla**

Look for long, slender stems floating near the water surface. Check for these characteristics:

- Pointed, bright green leaves about 5/8 inch long with small teeth on the edges.
- Leaves growing around the stem, generally in whorls of five, but they can range from four to eight.
- Tiny, floating white flowers visible in late summer to fall.
- Small, white to yellowish, potato-like tubers attached to the roots.

## **Be aware of look-alikes**

Note that hydrilla's long stems may look like common native and invasive aquatic plants in Michigan. Differences are found in the number of leaves per whorl and the smooth versus serrated leaf edges.

- Native elodea (*Elodea canadensis* and *Elodea nuttalli*) has three (rarely four) leaves per whorl.
- Mare's tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*) has six to 12 leaves per whorl.
- Brazilian elodea (invasive) leaves are smooth, not toothed at the edges.

## **Report suspected hydrilla**

Any suspicious aquatic plants should be reported as soon as possible to [EGLE-WRD-AIP@Michigan.gov](mailto:EGLE-WRD-AIP@Michigan.gov). Include close-up photos and provide the location of the detection in your report.

More information on identifying and reporting invasive aquatic plants can be found at [Michigan.gov/Invasives](https://Michigan.gov/Invasives).

*Michigan's Invasive Species Program is cooperatively implemented by the Michigan Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development; Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and Natural Resources.*



# Hydrilla

*Hydrilla verticillata*

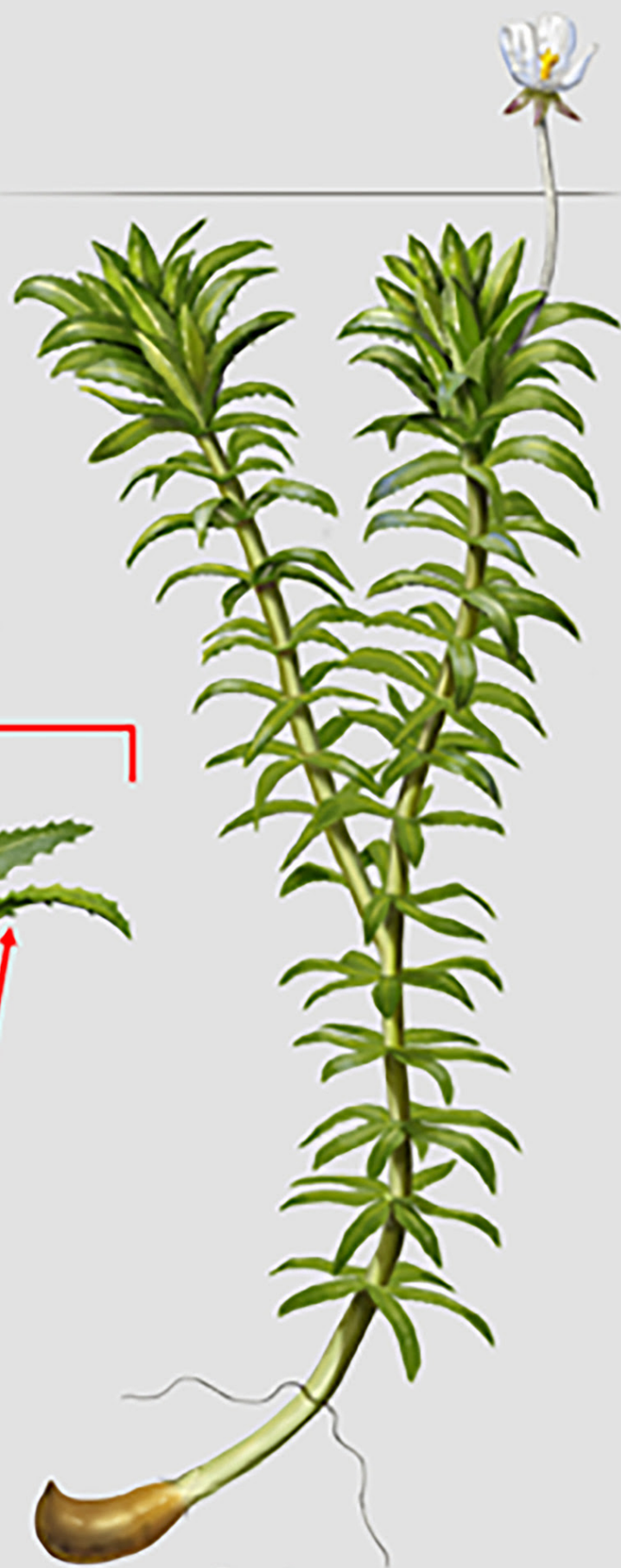
## Plant

- Submerged
- Rooted or free-floating



## Leaves

- Serrated edges
- Mid-vein has spines
- Arranged in whorls
- 4-8 leaves/whorl



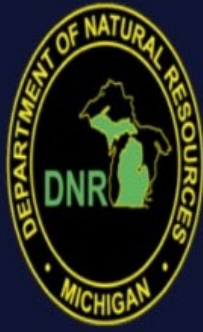
## Root

- Tuber

Illustration by Bruce Kerr



EGLE



Michigan Department of  
**AGRICULTURE**  
& Rural Development



If not **you**, then **who?**

We need **you!**

Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is the only all-volunteer non-profit organization in Michigan that is completely dedicated to reaching out on a daily,

pro-active basis to our state representatives and senators in regards to their on-going need to act now to protect our precious inland lakes, wetlands, rivers, and streams.

Please do not expect other lake associations, other individuals, and other corporations to fund MWA's efforts in Lansing.

If **you** want your voice to be heard in Lansing **you** need to be the other lake association, the other individual, and the other **corporation** to make a generous contribution to helping fund our on-going efforts in Lansing.

Please don't count on others to support the only organization in Michigan that is completely dedicated to voicing your legitimate concerns to our state legislators in Lansing.

We hire professional lobbyists - **Karoub Associates** - who understand the intricacies of dealing with state government - to reach out to our legislators. As you might imagine, the cost of hiring a professional, highly respected Lansing-based lobbying firm whose downtown Lansing office's are located within a literal stone's throw of Michigan's state capitol building is expensive - we believe, however, that to have someone in constant contact with our state senators and representatives it is more than worth the significant on-going expense.

To put it in blunt "no ifs, ands, or buts" terms, without **your** generous support we will be unable to continue our erstwhile efforts in Lansing.

Please also remember that with the exception of a few relatively minor expenses related to keeping our website updated, and on-line, and a few relatively minor costs associated with distributing our e-newsletter, **all** of our membership and donation derived income goes to paying our downtown Lansing-based lobbying

firm, and our attorneys. No exorbitant employee salaries or fringe benefit packages to pay!!!!!!!!!!

It is also important to note that last year **Michigan Waterfront Alliance** lawyers took a case all the way to the Michigan Supreme Court in order to get the State of Michigan to do it's job in protecting our lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

**Thank you** for reading and considering this hopefully convincing appeal for donations - **no amount is considered too small** - all donations of money are happily received and acknowledged within the context of the generous spirit that prompted them!!!!!!!!!!

**Click here** to become a dues paying member of MWA

**Click here** to make a generous donation to MWA



**>>> We Need Your Help!!! <<<**

**Why You Should Join  
Michigan Waterfront Alliance today?**

**Do you care about your favorite lake, river, or stream?**

**Do you care enough to contact your state senator or representative about issues that may affect the quality of your waterbody?**

**Do you keep track of the bills that are important to your lake, river, or stream that may have been introduced in the Michigan House or Senate?**

**The good news is that Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is doing this for you.**

**And while we're at it - we will remind you that the activities and efforts of the Michigan Waterfront Alliance are conducted entirely by passionate volunteers who donate their own time and personal resources to helping preserve and protect Michigan's extraordinary freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, stream and wetlands.**

**Did you know that not a single person who works directly on behalf of our non-profit organization receives compensation of any sort - financial or otherwise?**



**Did you know that with the exception of paying our attorneys to represent your interests, and the best interests of preserving our freshwater resources in court, that the majority of the relatively modest amount of revenue we generate from memberships is entirely dedicated to paying our Lansing-based lobbyist to work on your behalf and on behalf of protecting Michigan's water resources in our state capitol??**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance is a pro-active member of the collaborative lake conservation focused organization known as the Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership???**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance was a 'platinum' level sponsor of the 2022 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention??**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance is a founding member of the Michigan Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, a collaborative effort that is comprised of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and several statewide non-profit organizations that is dedicated to stopping the introduction and spread of exotic aquatic invasive plants and animals??**

**Did you know that our volunteers often reach out to elected members of the United States House of Representatives, the United States Senate, and to the United States**

**Environmental Protection Agency** in regards to resolving federal government level issues that pertain to protecting Michigan's freshwater resources??

Why not become a pro-active part of our efforts to help preserve and protect Michigan's incredible freshwater resources for future generations by becoming a member today??

Please remember that we rely entirely upon membership dues to fund the operating costs of our organization...

**TO BECOME A MEMBER OF  
MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE VISIT OUR  
>>>>>> MEMBERSHIP PAGE <<<<<<**

Annual Dues are:

\$50 for an individual;

\$100 for a lake association; and

\$200 for a corporation

With support from individuals like you, lake associations, and corporations, we can continue to work together as a unified voice choosing to protect Michigan's water resources for future generations. Thank you for your consideration!!!

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## ATTENTION READERS!!!

In order to add your friends, neighbors, and/or fellow lake or watershed conservation focused association member e-mails to our growing list of water resource conservation minded people who would like to receive this Michigan freshwater resources focused twice monthly newsletter, contact Editor Scott Brown at [scottb1952@gmail.com](mailto:scottb1952@gmail.com)

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### Join Michigan Waterfront Alliance!

- Are you tired of funding the management of aquatic invasive species on your lake that were introduced by recreational boaters using the local MI Department of Natural Resources public boating access site?
- Are you just a bit angry that recreational boaters using your lake are not being asked to contribute their fair share to combat the negative influences of aquatic invasive species?
- Are you worried about the fact that your lakefront residential property values are being negatively influenced by the steadily increasing presence of aquatic invasive species?
- Are you concerned about the fact that it is nearly impossible to find an inland lake in Michigan that

does not currently host one or more potentially harmful aquatic invasive species?

- Are you aware of the fact that inland lakes are Michigan's most valuable natural resource, and that our state legislature has thus far appropriated almost nothing in the way of budget resources to help ensure they remain healthy and viable?

If your answer is yes to any of these important questions, please help ensure that your voice is heard in Lansing by joining Michigan Waterfront Alliance today.

**Click here to Join MWA**



**Visit the Michigan Waterfront Alliance Web Site by Clicking Here**

[Unsubscribe](#)

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