



# VARIABLE-LEAF MILFOIL

*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*

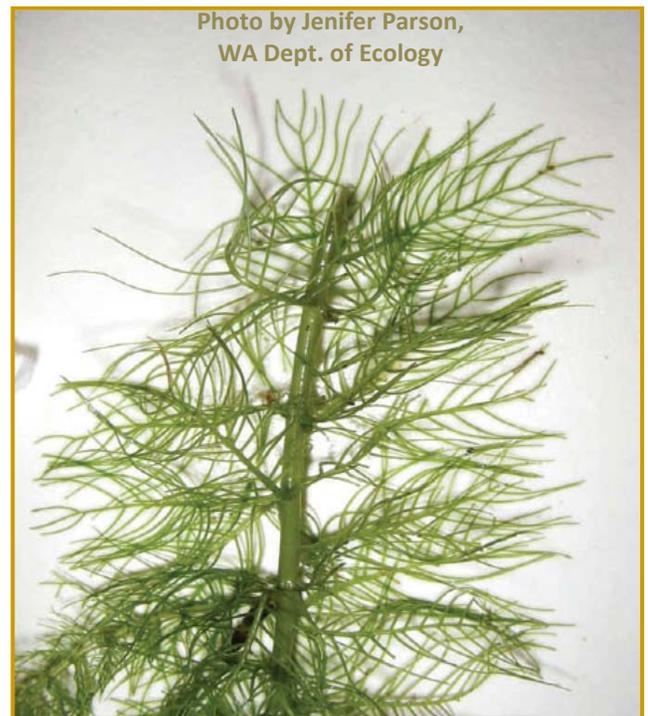


- ✦ Other names: Two-leaved watermilfoil, Broadleaf watermilfoil, Coontail, Coontail Moss, Red Foxtail
- ✦ Variable-Leaf Milfoil is a Class A noxious weed.
- ✦ An aquatic weed from the Haloragaceae Family, Variable-Leaf Milfoil spreads primarily through vegetative fragments, although it may also reproduce via seed production.
- ✦ Variable leaf milfoil is a submersed, rooted aquatic plant, that has both submerged and emergent leaves growing from a stout reddish brown stem. Its submerged leaves are from 1 to 2 inches long and arranged in whorls of 4 -5 finely divided (feather-like) leaves. It is rooted in the bottom of water bodies and grows up. When it reaches the surface of the water, the stems turn and grow horizontally. The flowers are small and reddish.

- ✦ Found in freshwater ponds, lakes, ditches and other still or flowing aquatic systems. It thrives in older more stabilized systems with clear, acidic water, where it may be rooted in depths up to 10 feet.
- ✦ It may be introduced into new bodies of water through the unintentional transport of plant fragments attached to boats and boat trailers, or the deliberate dumping of aquariums.
- ✦ Because of its tremendous growth rate, variable leaf milfoil quickly takes over the body of water it invades.
- ✦ This invasive aquatic plant can alter aquatic ecosystems. It forms dense mats that shade out other native aquatic plants, inhibits water flow, and recreational activities. It may be able to hybridize with the native watermilfoil, resulting in an even more aggressive hybrid.

## CONTROL OPTIONS

- ✦ As with all invasive species, the best form of control is prevention. Carefully inspect and clean boats, trailers, and



fishing gear to prevent transporting plant materials from one body of water to another. Never discard aquarium plants in sewer systems or water bodies.



- \* Small infestations can be hand pulled, making sure to remove the entire plant. Some success has been achieved with draw down techniques, though other species are impacted as well.
- \* Since Variable-Leaf Milfoil is an aquatic plant, the use of an herbicide formulated for aquatic settings is required. **Please note that aquatic herbicides are restricted for use in Washington State to licensed applicators only.**

