



PLM's Rapid Response on First Hydrilla Infestation Found in Michigan

The dreaded news we feared for over a decade was met with reality in September when Hydrilla was positively identified by the Water Resource Division of EGLE in two small waterbodies in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Hydrilla, widespread in southern states, has been a top "Watch List" species in Michigan for decades.

PLM was contacted by EGLE, as part of their Rapid Response Plan for new exotic plants, to get these waterbodies treated as quickly as possible. PLM responded immediately with an herbicide treatment to systemically treat the infestation in hopes to prevent it from spreading regionally or state wide. Hydrilla, a federally regulated plant, in which it is illegal to house and/or sell, has plagued southern US lakes for decades. It's ability to reproduce through fragmentation, stolons or rhizomes and tubers makes this plant extremely difficult to control. It quickly outcompetes native and most other nonnative plants (including Eurasian watermilfoil), forming a dense monoculture (single plant) and is considered one of the world's most invasive aquatic plants.



Picture by Eric Reed, PLM

Since Hydrilla was found south of Michigan's border in 2006 in Lake Manitou, Indiana, it has been a top priority species in all PLM's surveys. PLM has been actively monitoring thousands of waterbodies annually in hopes that if this plant was ever found, it could be contained to protect the rest of Michigan's waterways. PLM, in conjunction with EGLE, determined a proactive systemic control plan that was executed within days of its positive identification.

An early detection rapid response plan is vital to any management plan in order to protect it from new invaders that threaten our lakes. PLM works closely with our clients to ensure that proper protocols are in place to protect our lakes. With Hydrilla positively identified in Michigan, it is important that everyone is on the look out for this plant and know the key identifiers.

Hydrilla looks very similar to Michigan's native species, Elodea as well as another nonnative invader, Brazilian elodea. Hydrilla has a whorl of more than 3 leaves, has tiny serrated edges, and is the ONLY submerged plant to produce tubers.

Help protect Michigan's over 11,000 waterbodies and be on the lookout for Hydrilla. Please contact PLM for assistance with any identification or with your own Early Detection Rapid Response Plan.

INVASIVE		NATIVE
<p>Michael J. Godowitz, U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center</p>	<p>Christian Finley, www.commons-wikimedia.org</p>	<p>Paul Skawronski, Aquatic Plants of the Upper Midwest</p>
<p>HYDRILLA <i>Hydrilla verticillata</i> INVASIVE</p> <p>a. whorls of more than 3 leaves b. leaves often have visibly toothed edge c. leaf vein often has small visible spines</p>	<p>BRAZILIAN ELODEA <i>Egeria densa</i> INVASIVE</p> <p>a. whorls of more than 3 leaves b. leaves do not have visibly toothed edge c. leaf vein is smooth underneath</p> <p>Illustrations: Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, University of Florida</p>	<p>AMERICAN ELODEA <i>Elodea canadensis</i> NATIVE</p> <p>a. whorls of exactly 3 leaves b. leaves do not have visibly toothed edge c. leaf vein is smooth underneath</p>