MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Tawes State Office Building
580 Taylor Ave.
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-260-8DNR or toll free 877-620-8DNR
dnr.maryland.gov

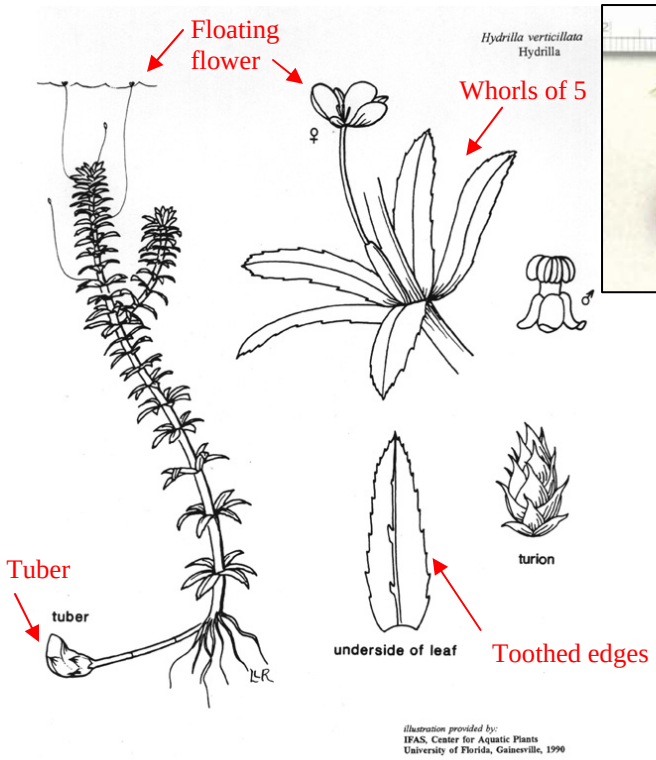
Attention:
Invasive *Hydrilla* has been identified in Deep Creek Lake!

What is it?

Hydrilla verticillata, also known as Water Thyme, is an invasive aquatic plant from Asia and Africa. It came to the United States decades ago as an aquarium plant and has since spread across the country from waterbody to waterbody, transported as fragments on boats and swimming gear.

How do you identify it?

Hydrilla stems are long, slender and freely branching with whorls of 3-6 linear leaves (most commonly 5). Leaves have strongly toothed or serrated edges. The serrations are small but visible without magnification. Small white flowers may be seen floating on the surface. Roots form along nodes of rhizomes that grow horizontally atop or just below sediment surface. Tubers are also commonly found at the end of runners that branch from the buried rhizome.



What are the reasons for concern in Deep Creek Lake?
Hydrilla can outcompete native plants along shore in shallow areas and coves, and because it has lower light requirements, also has the potential to grow deeper without competition.

By outcompeting native plants, *Hydrilla* may lead to changes in water temperature and oxygen availability for aquatic organisms, not only lowering plant diversity , but also lowering diversity of both fishes and aquatic invertebrates.

Hydrilla can create dense surface mats that interfere with water flow, boat traffic, and fishing, and also limits the light available to native species.

Hydrilla fragments can sprout roots and establish new plants, so boats with outboard motors easily spread it to other parts of the lake and other waterbodies.

Are there other plants in Deep Creek Lake that look like Hydrilla?
Yes! *Elodea canadensis*, also knows as Common waterweed, has a similar appearance to *Hydrilla* and is found throughout Deep Creek Lake. *Elodea* leaves are more often seen in whorls of 3 and are not as markedly toothed or pointed as those of *Hydrilla*. *Elodea* also lacks the tubers that *Hydrilla* forms in late summer or early fall.

As a concerned citizen, how can I help?
Avoid running through dense beds of vegetation with your boat.
Inspect your boat, trailer, and equipment before and after launching in any water body.
Remove and properly dispose of any plant matter that you find—either place it in a trash can or well above the water line where it won't wash back in.

If you suspect you have *Hydrilla* near your property or have seen *Hydrilla* in the lake, please identify the location and send as much information as possible to Mark Lewandowski at mark.lewandowski@maryland.gov

Tawes State Office Building 580 Taylor Ave. Annapolis, MD 21401
410-260-8DNR or toll free 877-620-8DNR
dnr.maryland.gov