

Native Maine Plants Found in Watchic Lake - 2016 Screening Day.

On July 17, 2016 a group of 10 WLA board members and volunteers surveyed Watchic Lake for invasive plant species – none were found. As a member of the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, we are asked to submit an inventory of the native plants found in the lake (this list of plants).

Most of the materials below come from the Maine VLMP. Where materials have come from other agencies, those are noted in the summary along with links to more detail.

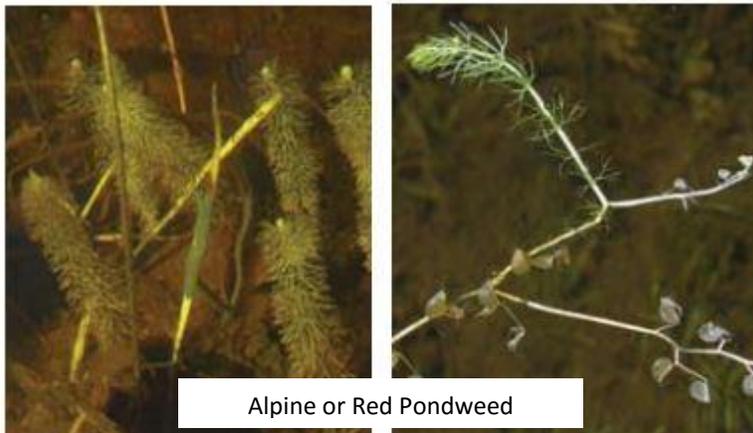
Alpine or Red Pondweed *Potamogeton alpinus*



Red/Alpine pondweed has two distinct leaf types: submersed leaves and floating leaves. Red/Alpine pondweed is native to Maine, New England and much of the northern and western United States. Two varieties of red pondweed have been documented in the US (var. *tenuifolius* and *subellipticus*), primarily based upon the submersed leaf shape. However, since both leaf types may be observed in the same population, the distinction is rarely recognized. More details from Maine VLMP here on [Alpine/Red Pondweed](#).

Bladderwort, northern *Utricularia intermedia*

Northern Bladderwort is one of four commonly found Bladderworts in Maine. Tiny, lopsided sack-like bladders used for capturing invertebrate prey are either attached directly to the leaves or to specialized leafless stems. In addition to this key shared feature, all four bladderworts that are native to Maine have finely-divided, branched, submersed leaves and produce irregular snapdragon-like flowers. More details from Maine VLMP here "[Bladderworts](#)"



Northern bladderwort (*U. intermedia*): submersed stems (left)
Leaves and bladders occur on separate stems (right)

Common Bladderwort



Bladderwort, common *Utricularia macrorhiza*

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Coontail



Coontail *Ceratophyllum demersum*

Both of Maine's native hornwort species are submersed aquatic plants with coarse, branching stems and no roots. The leaves of both species are fork-divided and arranged in whorls of 5 to 12 leaves. Whorls of leaves are more closely spaced towards the end of branches giving the plant a raccoon tail appearance. Hornwort leaves are relatively stiff to the touch and typically hold their shape and position when pulled from the water, unlike many other plants with finely divided leaves. A close look at the leaves is needed to distinguish

between species. Coontail leaves are generally forked only once or twice, flattened, finely serrated, with tiny teeth often tipped with a sharp spine. More details from Maine VLMP here in "[Hornworts](#)".

Pipewort *Eriocaulon aquaticum*

Pipewort is a native Maine plant. It is a very small aquatic plant with a height of only 2 to 12 inches when on exposed shore, but stems will be longer deeper water. Despite the smallness of the plant and that sexual reproduction must occur in outside of the water, it is found growing to depths of up to 7 feet. This plant is easy to overlook, especially when only its grass-like leaves are present. Generally found growing above the water line in shallow areas of Watchic Lake starting in July. More details on Pipewort can be found here [Lake and Wetland Ecosystems](#) and here the [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services](#).



Pipewort

Pondweed, floating-leaf *Potamogeton natans*

An aquatic species native to Maine often found in quiet or slow-flowing freshwater habitats. It produces both floating and submersed leaves on the same plant. The floating leaves are ovate to oblong-ovate and are dark green, leathery, opaque, with translucent longitudinal veins. They are 2 to 5 inches long, pointed at the tips, and rounded at the base. Floating-leaf pondweed are an important food source for wildlife, and in natural areas a positive component of the local ecosystem. However, they can become troublesome in drainage canals and ditches. More details can be found in [Wikipedia Potamogeton natans](#) and from [University California, Davis.](#)



Pondweed, large-leaf *Potamogeton amplifolius*

Large-leaf pondweed is native to Maine, New England and much of the United States. Large-leaf pondweed is a large, stately plant, with two distinct leaf types. The submersed leaves (3 to 7 cm wide) are the broadest of any pondweed in Maine. The many veins of these supple, translucent leaves are easy to see when held to the light. The floating leaves are slightly smaller (2.5 to 5 cm wide), more oval-shaped, and not translucent. More details can be found on the Maine VLMP website on [Large-Leaf Pondweed](#).



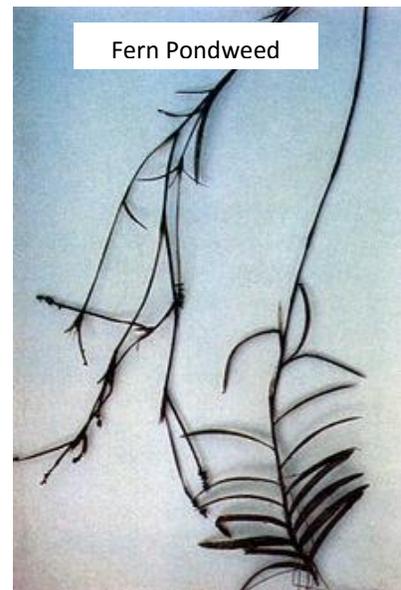
Pondweed, Sago *Stuckenia pectinate*

This perennial plant is a submerged aquatic about 1-3' long. There is more branching of the stems above than below, creating fan-like aggregations of leaves. Sago Pondweed is generally beneficial; waterfowl extensively use and rely on it as a food source. The whole plant can be consumed, and parts are utilized by diving, dabbling, whistling ducks, many types of geese, swans, coots and the long-billed dowitchers. More info can be found at the [Illinois Wildflower](#) site and the [USDA Natural Resources Conservation plant](#) site.



Pondweed, Fern or Robbins *Potamogeton robbinsii*

Fern-leaf pondweed is a stiff, robust plant with underwater leaves only. It is usually easily recognized because its dark green, closely spaced leaves are arranged in a rigid, flattened spray, giving it a palm frond or fern-like appearance. Fern-leaf pondweed is usually a low-growing plant and only approaches the water surface when flowering. The flowering stalks have more widely spaced leaves that are less fan-like in appearance. More info can be found from [State of Washington Department of Ecology](#) and the [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services](#).



Pondweed, slender *Potamogeton pusillus*

Slender pondweeds are native to Maine and New England. They grow in the submersed plant community. They are found in soft sediments in quiet water of lakes, ponds and slow-moving streams, in depth up to three meters. These pondweeds thrive in deeper, darker water and will tolerate turbid and brackish conditions. They have submersed leaves only. Sinuous stems (up to 1.5 meters long) emerge from delicate roots. Stems may be round to slightly compressed in cross section, and often branch repeatedly near the growing tips. More details can be found at [Slender Pondweeds - Maine VLMP](#).

Pondweed, variable *Potamogeton gramineus*

Variable pondweed is native to Maine, New England and much of the northern United States. It hybridizes freely with several other pondweed species including *P. perfoliatus*. Four distinct hybrids are known to occur in Maine. Slender, often profusely branching stems emerge from spreading rhizomes. As the common name implies, the habit and form of individual plants (and plant populations) can be highly variable, depending on growing conditions: some plants are compact, very bushy, with small leaves; others are sprawling, leggier, with larger leaves. More details can be found at [Variable Pondweeds - Maine VLMP](#).

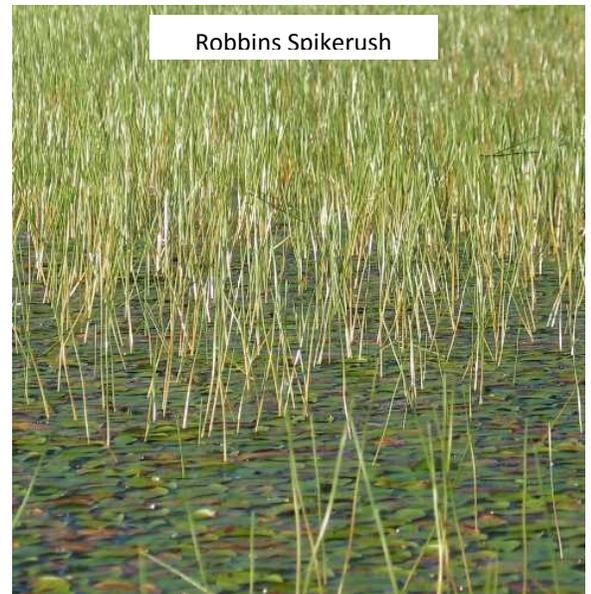




Spatterdock or Cow Lily *Nuphar variegata*
 Spatterdock is one of the most common aquatic plants in New England and is widely distributed in Maine. Its range includes much of the northern United States. Spatterdock is part of the floating-leaved plant community, growing in depths up to 2 meters. It is especially abundant in still or slow moving waters with soft sediments. Spatterdock can grow in sun or shade, but flowers more readily in good light. More details can be found at [Spatterdock \(Cow Lily\) - Maine VLMP](#).

Spikerush, Robbins' *Eleocharis robbinsii*

Robbins' Spikerush is native to Maine, New England and much of the northern United States. It grows in a variety of wetland habitats throughout its range. Robbins' Spikerush can grow in rather deep water (up to 3 ft), and often produces capillary stems when submerged. Limited information is available at the [USDA site – Robbins' Spikerush](#).



Stonewort spp. *Nitella* spp.

Stoneworts are native to Maine and New England. They occur throughout most of the United States. They are actually large upright forms of algae. They usually grow in tangled masses along the bottom. The stems and branches of nitella are generally bright green, translucent and smooth to the touch. Unlike Chara Stonewort (Muskgrass) which is brittle and coarse, *Nitella* gives off no skunky odor. More on [Stoneworts from Maine VLPM](#) and [Texas A&M University](#).



Water hemlock, bulb-bearing *Cicuta bulbifera*

Water hemlock is native to Maine and New England. A perennial, it reproduces by its seeds and bulbils. It grows along the edges of marshes and lake margins, in bogs, wet meadows, shallow standing water and along slow-moving streams. It can also grow on hummocks and floating mats, on partially submerged rotting logs, and is even known to grow on beaver dams. This species is normally found in high-quality wetlands. Of all the plants the WLA found during our screening day, this is the one we feel there is a chance it is not properly identified (there was little Maine VLMP info). Other sources with more detailed information include [Wikipedia](#), [Illinois Wildflowers](#), and [MassNature](#).



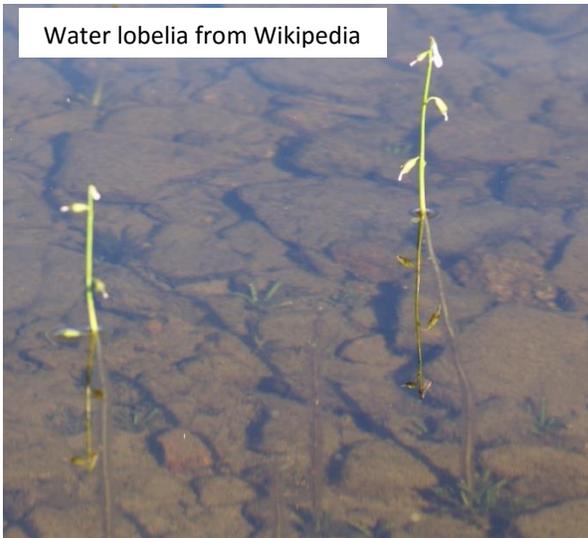
Water lobelia from MassNature



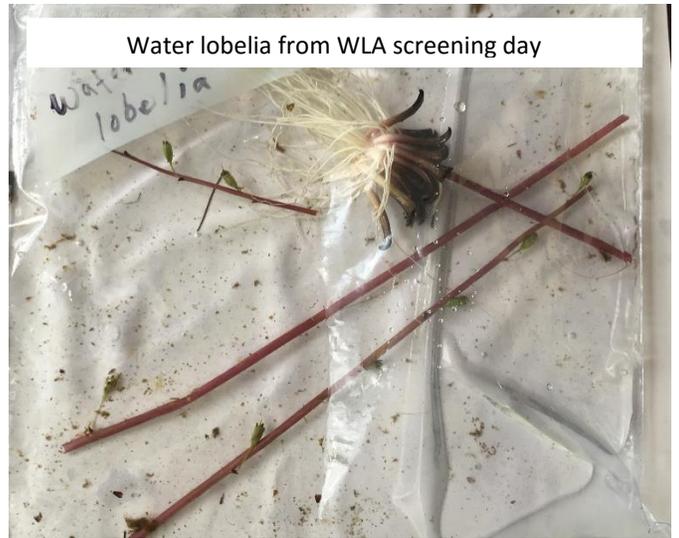
Bulb bearing water hemlock from WLA screening day

Water lobelia *Lobelia dortmanna*

Water lobelia is native to Maine. The base of plant resembles pipewort, but leaves are rounded at the tip. Flowers are white to lavender. It typically occurs in shallow water on sandy, peaty or rocky lakeshores, in pools, and in some kinds of wetlands. It is rarely found in rivers. More info on water lobelia from [Maine VLMP on Common Native Plants](#) and [Wikipedia](#).



Water lobelia from Wikipedia



Water lobelia from WLA screening day

Northern water-milfoil *Myriophyllum sibiricum*

Northern water-milfoil is native to Maine, new England and to other parts of the United States. It has two distinct leaf types: submersed leaves and emergent leaves associated with the flowers (called bracts). The submersed leaves are finely feather-divided (1 to 5 cm long), with 5 to 14 pairs of leaflet pairs per leaf. Whorls of 4 or 5 leaves are spaced (up to 1 cm apart) along the stem. Northern milfoil produces flowers and fruits above or at the water's surface on erect (4 to 15 cm) spikes. Even when fully developed, the flowers are very small. The bracts are the same length or slightly longer than the flowers and fruits. Toward the end of the growing season, egg-shaped winter buds (or turions) comprised of small stiff leaves are formed along the submersed stems. More info [on northern water-milfoil from Maine VLMP](#).



Watercress, true *Nasturtium officinale*

Watercress is a rapidly growing, aquatic or semi-aquatic, perennial plant native to Europe and Asia, and introduced the US years ago. It is one of the oldest known leaf vegetables consumed by humans. It is currently a member of the family Brassicaceae, botanically related to garden cress, mustard, radish and wasabi—all noteworthy for their piquant flavor. More info from the [USDA Forest Service](#) as well as [Wikipedia](#).



Waterwort *Elatine minima*

The tiny “seedling-like” waterwort (*Elatine minima*) is a good example of a native annual. The miniature flowers and seed capsules of this plant are produced in the leaf axils (where the leaf meets the stem) during the warm summer months. The ripened seeds drop and settle onto the bottom sediments through the late summer and fall, and there they remain, in a state of dormancy, through the winter. See here for more information from on [Waterwort from Maine VLMP](#).

