

Waterwheel Plant (*Aldrovanda vesiculosa*)

Identification:

At a glance, waterwheel appears to be a long, feathery strand of algal material, but upon further investigation, it is comprised of many limbs with small scoop-like openings at the ends, which meet at many central nodes along the main stem. These, if viewed head-on, resemble a water-wheel.

Habitat and Spread:

With the well-known Venus flytrap as a close relative, Waterwheel Plant feeds on aquatic animals, it's able to exist in low nutrient wetlands. The species is currently contained in one site, a large pond within the CRISP boundary where it is being closely monitored. It is able to spread by reproducing from virtually any piece of the plant, and can be transported by waterfowl or other animals, water-body movement, or by boats.



Management Techniques:

Pulling from the one known site of infestation in New York State has been the best current method, since herbicide is a much less viable option in the case of immersed aquatic plants. If an herbicide were to be used, application must be carried out with great caution as to avoid native species, and ensure the chemical being used is aquatic safe.

Native Range and Original Introduction:

It is native to every temperature continent (Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia), other than North America, and is considered highly endangered in its native habitats. To encourage the continuation of the species globally, aquatic plant enthusiasts physically placed Waterwheel in its North American sites. It was first confirmed as being invasive to the United States in Virginia in 2014, and has been placed in NYS and NJ since.



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