

Myriophyllum triphyllum

COMMON NAME

Water milfoil

SYNONYMS

Myriophyllum elatinoides

FAMILY

Haloragaceae

AUTHORITY

Myriophyllum triphyllum Orchard

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

MYRELA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North, South and Chatham Islands

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).



Stevensons Island, Lake Wanaka.
Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Ahuriri Valley, Canterbury. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Weak aquatic herb; stems 50-100 cm long, rooting mainly at base, 1-2(-3) mm diameter; leaves dimorphic, verticillate. Submerged leaves in whorls of (2-)3(-4), ovate in outline, sessile (petiole 0.1-0.2 mm long), (6-)10-15 mm long, (5-)7-10(-15) mm wide, pectinate with 12-18 filiform pinnae 8 mm long. Leaves lacking hydathodes at base. Emergent leaves red-purple, in whorls of 3(-4), very rarely becoming alternate in upper part of inflorescence, narrowly ovate to obovate, (2.5-)5-6(-12) × (1.5-)2.0-2.5(-4.0) mm, entire (or those of lower whorls incised), obtuse, shorter than internodes at flowering. Transition from submerged to emergent leaves abrupt (1-2 whorls). Inflorescence all indeterminate spike, sometimes with 2-4 lateral inflorescences arising from axils of the upper whorl of submerged leaves. Flowers 4-merous, borne singly in axils of the emergent leaves, upper flowers male, lower ones female. Bracteoles cream, lanceolate, (1.0-)1.4-1.8(2.0) × (0.2-)0.3-0.4 mm, entire or minutely 3-4 toothed, acute. Male flowers. Sepals 4, cream, deltoid, 0.5-0.6 mm long, 0.4-0.5 mm wide, weakly 2-3-toothed. Petals 4, yellow to reddish, hooded, not or only very weakly keeled, 2.0-2.8 × 2.0 mm wide. Stamens 8; filaments 0.1 mm long, lengthening after anthesis; anthers linear-oblong, 1.8-2.4 × 0.4 mm wide, antisealous anthers c. 0.3 mm longer than antipetalous ones, non-apiculate. Styles 4, clavate, c. 0.2 mm long, vestigial. Ovary ± cubiform, 0.7 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, lobed opposite petals, non-functional. Petals and stamens of lowermost whorl of male flowers sometimes smaller than in upper whorls. Female flowers. Sepals 4, deltoid, 0.2 mm long, 0.2 mm wide, minutely serrate, vestigial. Petals 4, 0.5 mm long, vestigial. Stamens 0. Styles 4, clavate, 0.5 mm long, stigmas fimbriate, cream. Ovary ± cubiform, 1.0 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, 4-lobed opposite petals. Fruit reddish-purple, ± cubiform, 1.3-1.4(-1.5) × 1.4-1.5 mm wide, styles persistent and erect, fruit prominently 4-lobed opposite styles, splitting at maturity into 4 mericarps. Mericarps cylindrical, 1.4 mm long, 0.8 mm diam., smooth and rounded on dorsal surface, sometimes with a faint dorsal line, planar on faces where joined to other mericarps.

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. An excellent plant for pond, slow flowing stream or fish tank.

ETYMOLOGY

myriophyllum: Many leaves

triphyllum: Three-leaved

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Orchard (1979)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Orchard, A.E. 1979: *Myriophyllum* (Haloragaceae) in Australasia. 1. New Zealand: a revision of the genus and a synopsis of the family. *Brunonia* 2: 247-287.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myriophyllum-triphyllum/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myriophyllum-triphyllum/>