



Information Sheet 10 Spiked Water Milfoil

Introduction

Myriophyllum spicatum (Spiked Water-milfoil) is a submerged aquatic macrophyte. It is characterised by

groups of four feathery leaves arranged around a circular stem. The stem can be slightly reddish in colour and the flowers are red. It should not be confused with *M. verticillatum* which has light green emergent leaves, or *M. alterniflorum*, a species characteristic of oligotrophic (low nutrient / slightly acidic) waters. It often forms dense mono-specific stands, or is commonly associated with Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*). This plant often grows in lakes, ponds and ditches, but is not found in faster flowing water. It reproduces by seed and by vegetative growth and control measures should take this into account.

Mechanical control

This plant responds well to mechanical control. Dredging is the most effective means of removal, however, cutting has a relatively short term (1-2 months in summer) effect. The cut material must be removed from the water to avoid deoxygenation. The cut weed can be left to decompose in small heaps away from the side of the water, taking care to avoid seepage of the liquor back into the water. However, if large amounts are to be disposed of then it should be taken to a recognised local authority tip or landfill site. There are several appropriate methods of mechanical control, removal by hand, raking, scythes, chains, weed bucket, weed boat or dredging. All are suitable.

Chemical control

Myriophyllum spicatum is susceptible to terbutryn, and dichlobenil applied in spring before the plant is fully grown. The only product approved for use in or near water containing terbutryn is Clarosan 1FG. It is a granule formulation. This herbicide will kill all submerged vegetation and can only be used in still water. Approved products containing dichlobenil are Midstream GSR, Casoron G and Luxan. These are also granules. Only Casoron G or Luxan should be used in shallow and/or narrow watercourses. The flow limitation with these products is up to 1.5 m per min. Dichlobenil affects most rooted submerged plants and some rushes too.

Myriophyllum spicatum
Eurasian water milfoil

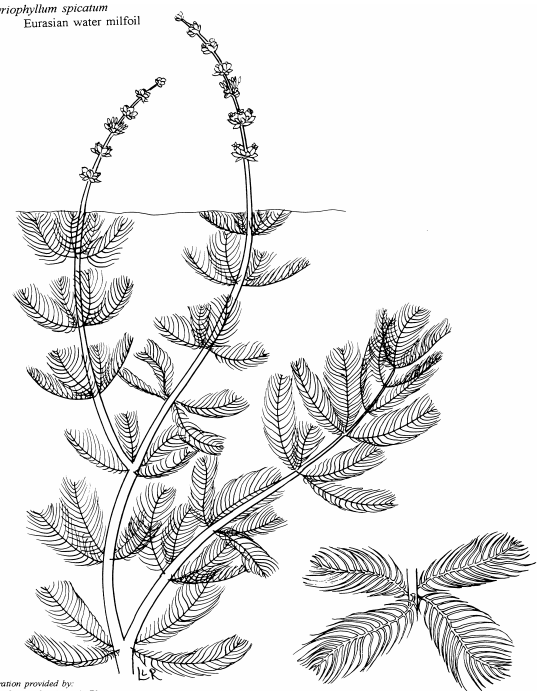


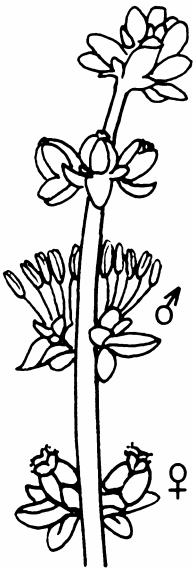
Illustration provided by:
IFAS, Center for Aquatic Plants
University of Florida, Gainesville, 1990

Chemical control will give effective eradication of the plant for between 2 and 3 years. Regular inspections should be made to check on re-infestation and spot treatments should be applied to prevent further spread.

Be sure to obtain agreement from your local Environment Agency before applying any herbicide to water.

Biological control

The use of herbivorous Grass Carp is appropriate as a control method for this plant. Common Carp, and other bottom feeding fish, which create turbid water, can also be effective in preventing regrowth of the plant after mechanical removal or control by a herbicide. There have been reports of sudden population crashes of this species and it may be that some form of self-regulation occurs in some situations. It is not known if this is due to a pathogen.



Environmental control

Shade will control most submerged aquatic plants. This can be achieved by planting trees on the south side of waterbodies or by using a floating sheet of opaque material. Care must be taken when using the latter to prevent sudden deoxygenation.

Best option

In mixed stands: Remove as much of the plant as possible by mechanical means and apply spot treatments of Casoron G or Midstream GSR to remaining infestations.

In mono-specific stands in enclosed still waters use Clarosan 1FG after mechanical removal.