Eurasian Milfoil

When you are looking at those large expanses of weed you see on the lake they are most likely Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) and not the much less destructive native milfoil. The rapid spread of EWM across North America has been attributed mainly to boat traffic; plant fragments are accidentally transported from one lake to another on boats and trailers. This plant grows to depths of 10 meters, creating large dense mats on the water surface.

What is the impact of EWM?

- Reduced biodiversity as milfoil competes aggressively with native plants
- Reduced fish populations because of reduced oxygen levels resulting from decomposing plants
- Reduced recreational enjoyment from swimming, boating and fishing because of thick mats of milfoil
- Reduced property values
- Increased mosquito population because dense milfoil can create stagnant water

How can I know it's Eurasian Watermilfoil?

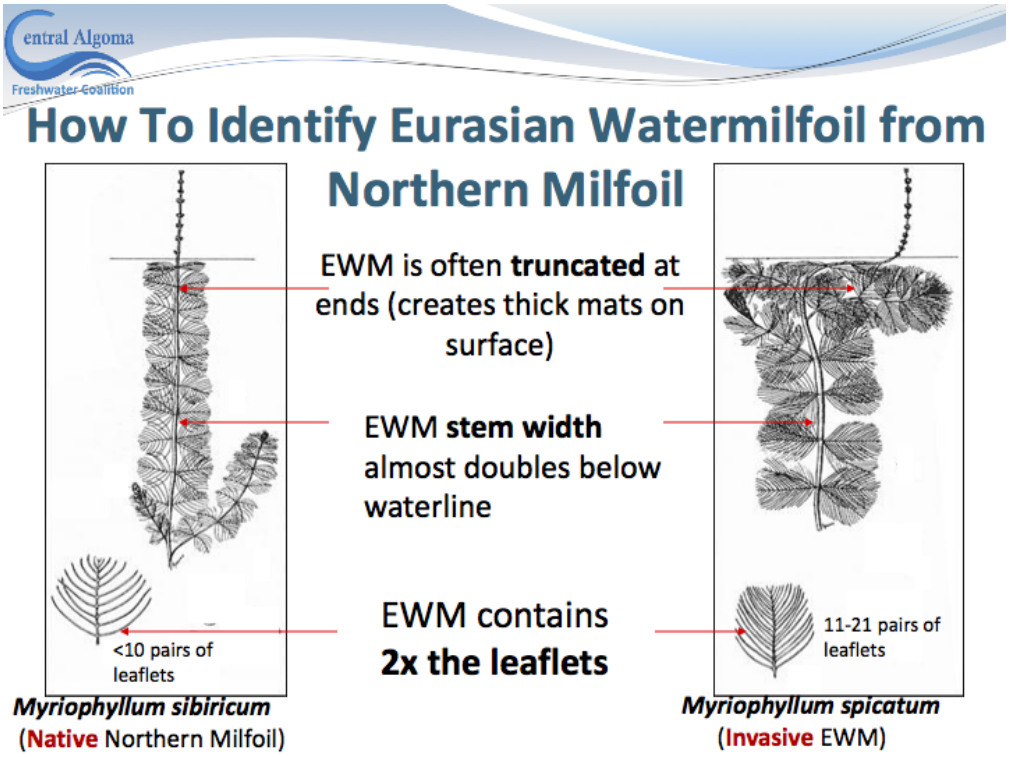

Figure 1 Difference between native Northern milfoil and Eurasian Watermilfoil.[1]

[1] Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition: http://www.centralalgomafreshwatercoalition.ca/cmsAdmin/uploads/How-To-Identify-Eurasian-Watermilfoil-from-Northern-Milfoil.pdf

What can be done to control EWM?[2]

You can't remove all EWM. However, you can control it and manage infestations to help ensure the lake remains healthy and can be used for recreation. **What's most important: any EWM fragment can become a new plant. So if you're removing plants, remove the fragments.** Some solutions being considered are as follows:

- **Bottom Barriers**, such as burlap or other weed cloths work effectively in shallower water (up to a depth of 8 to 10 feet)
- **Diver-operated suction harvesting**, (DASH), removes plants and roots in any depth.
- A **hydrorake** removes plant roots and shoots by raking the lake bottom near shore.
- **Hand pulling** milfoil is effective for controlling small, newly introduced milfoil populations.
- **Mechanical harvesters** cut off the milfoil four to six feet below the surface thus weakening root structures and enabling native species to reestablish; it is faster than DASH harvesting.
- **Rotavating** involves a machine that "tills" the lake bottom, dislodging both the roots and stems of the plant.
- **Biological controls** such as the milfoil weevil; the weevil has shown promise as a biological control agent but its use is not permitted in Quebec.

What is being done at Lake Bernard?

- Working with partners at Lac Notre Dame, the municipality and the ministry of the Environment.
- Working with ABV des 7 to complete a lake-wide assessment of the problem.
- Analyzing the solutions listed above to find the appropriate mix for our lake.
- Installing lake buoys in trouble spots.
- Completing pilot projects to assess effectiveness of different solutions.

What can you do to help?

- When removing mats of EWM dispose of them 15 metres from shore.
- If your propeller cuts weeds, pull them out of the lake.
- Wash any boats thoroughly before putting them in the lake.
- Only use manual cutters when there is a gentle onshore breeze and remove all cuttings.

The lake association needs assistance. You can help by:

- Putting up buoys
- Assisting representatives from ABV-7
- Assessing potential solutions
- Writing grants
- Liaising with Minister of the environment and other levels of government
- Developing financial plans
- Developing communications/awareness strategies
- Overseeing projects

Get involved NOW and help save our lake! Contact:

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Environment Committee
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[2] Derived from guidance provided by Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Watershed Management Division: http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/lakes/htm/ans/lp_ewm.htm