

# Potamogeton perfoliatus

## COMMON NAME

clasped pondweed

## FAMILY

Potamogetonaceae

## AUTHORITY

Potamogeton perfoliatus L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Submerged aquatic plant that has green to red/brown leaves arranged alternately on stems, with the base of the leaves 'clasping' the stem. The leaves are up to 7cm long and 4cm wide with undulating margins, distinct longitudinal veins and finer transverse ones.

## DISTRIBUTION

Eradicated, only known from three sites, near Lakes Wakatipu and Hayes, Otago and Christchurch.

## HABITAT

Moderate flowing to still water bodies.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Entirely submerged, bottom-rooting, normally perennial. Slender rhizomes and roots. The stems are up to 2m long, and the leaves clasp the stem. Alternate leaves are narrow to broadly ovate and greater than 6mm wide (although variable in size), green to red/brown in colour, thin and translucent, with undulating margins and many longitudinal veins and finer transverse venation. The inflorescence spike is short (1 to 2 cm long) when in fruit. Flowers small, green, on dense spikes up to 3 cm long at water surface. The fruit are 2.5 to 3 cm long, olive-green and smooth, convex on the ventral side and semi-circular on the dorsal. The keel is faint, as are 2 lateral ridges on the dorsal side and the beak is very short.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Potamogeton perfoliatus can be distinguished from all other potamogetons by the way the leaf clasps the stem.

## FLOWERING

November - January

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green

## FRUITING

Not seen in New Zealand

## LIFE CYCLE

Reproduces by stem fragments and seeds. Dispersed by water, people liberating fish, possibly birds.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1996

## ORIGIN

Native to Central and North America, Eurasia, Africa and Australia



Potamogeton perfoliatus. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond and aquarium plant

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify Ministry for Primary Industries if found.

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of sandy to muddy sediments, still to fast flowing , fresh or brackish water.

## ETYMOLOGY

**potamogeton**: River dweller

## NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

**This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord.** The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

Aston, H (1977). Aquatic plants of Australia. Melbourne University Press, 367pp.; Sculthorpe (1967) the biology of aquatic vascular plants. Edward Arnold Press, London.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/potamogeton-perfoliatus/>