

Curlyleaf pondweed
(*Potamogeton crispus*)

Currently in Montana, noxious weed infest about 8.2 million acres. Many of these state listed noxious weeds were brought to America as ornamentals for gardens, medicinal purposes, by accident in discarded soil from a ship's ballast, or unintentionally in bags of seed brought from other parts of the world. Whatever the cause of introduction non-native plant species have found their way onto Montana's state listed noxious weed list.

Curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) is native to Africa, Eurasia, and Australia. Curlyleaf pondweed was introduced into the United States in the early 1900's by hobbyists who used this plant in aquariums and then dumped the contents of the aquariums into bodies of water. Curlyleaf pondweed creates dense mats of vegetation in water bodies that die off and create large amounts of floating waste that can be dangerous to swimmers and boaters. Curlyleaf pondweed is very hardy due to its extensive and dense root system providing the plant with the capability to survive extreme conditions. It has been found growing under snow and ice! Curlyleaf pondweed resembles other species of *Potamogeton*, except curlyleaf pondweed is the only species with curly edged leaves that resemble lasagna noodles. The stem of this plant is four-angled, has few branches, and can grow to 31" long. Leaves are oblong, 2-3" long, and are blue-green in color. Curlyleaf pondweed produces a flower spike that usually has up to 10 flowers per spike. The flowers are cream to brown in color. When this plant flowers, the spike grows above the waters' surface and blooms. This plant reproduces by seeds and root buds called, turions. Turions break off from the parent plant and are carried downstream, where they establish new infestations. There are several species of native pondweed in Montana and it's often difficult to tell what's native and what's not. Native species of pondweed have veins that run parallel, whereas invasive curlyleaf has veins that branch from a mid-vein in a perpendicular pattern.

Please take a few moments to learn about noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are not currently a problem in your area, they may be in the near future. For more information about Montana's state listed noxious weeds, regulated plants, or weed species listed on your county weed list, please contact your local county weed district (can list weed district name here... ex: Lewis & Clark County Weed District) at _(406)_(Phone number)_. Or you can contact the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-5600.