

POTAMOGETON RICHARDSONII (Ar. Benn.) Rydb.  
Richardson's Pondweed

FAMILY: Potamogetonaceae

SYNONYMS: *Potamogeton perfoliatus* L. var. *richardsonii* Ar. Benn.  
*Potamogeton perfoliatus* L. ssp. *richardsonii* (Ar. Benn.) Hulten

HABIT: Submersed aquatic arising from a white rhizome, stem usually branched;  
flowering July-September; fruiting August-October.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Some specimens of *P. richardsonii* may be mistaken for *P. praelongus* or *P. perfoliatus*, especially if they lack fruit. The strongly clasping leaf bases of *P. richardsonii* ordinarily should distinguish the species from *P. praelongus*, which has leaf bases merely subcordate and sessile. The leaves of *P. richardsonii* are generally more coarsely textured and nerved than those of *P. perfoliatus*, but occasional specimens occur which rather closely approach *P. perfoliatus* and sometimes are treated as *P. perfoliatus* var. *richardsonii* or ssp. *richardsonii* (see Synonyms).

TOTAL RANGE: Quebec to AK, s. to PA, IN, IA, CO, and CA.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Ashtabula, Carroll, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake, Lucas, Ottawa, Portage, and Summit counties.

HABITAT: Habitats vary widely and include the Great Lakes and connecting waterways, inland lakes, rivers, and creeks; in waters up to 5 m.; frequently in brackish or alkaline waters.

HAZARDS: Unknown, but perhaps turbidity or mechanical disturbance.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Presumed favorable with reference to Lake Erie waters, assuming a lack of further water quality degradation; however, recovery in inland waters is presumed poor.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Every effort should be made to obtain fruiting specimens; however, in the absence of fertile material, sterile specimens should be collected.

COMMENTS: A hybrid origin for *P. richardsonii* derived from *P. praelongus* and *P. perfoliatus* has been proposed and may account for a lack of strongly distinguishing characters in some specimens. Additionally, *P. richardsonii* is known to hybridize with *P. amplifolius*, *P. gramineus*, *P. illinoensis*, *P. nodosus*, *P. perfoliatus*, and *P. praelongus*. These factors add to the difficulty of determining the Ohio material.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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Ogden, E.C. 1943. The broad-leaved species of *Potamogeton* of North America, north of Mexico. *Rhodora* 45: 57-105, 119-163, 171-214.

Ogden, E.C. 1974. *Potamogeton* in New York. New York St. Museum Bull. No. 423. Albany, NY. 20 p.



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