

# CURLY LEAF PONDWEED

*Pontamogeton crispus*



## Aquatic Invasive Species: Control and Prevention

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) impede recreation, degrade water quality, and, once established, are very difficult to control. There currently are invasive plants, invertebrates, mollusks, and fish in Lake Tahoe. Partner organizations around the lake have been implementing preventative measures to ensure that additional AIS are not introduced. Species of the highest concern that are not currently present in the Tahoe Basin include Zebra mussels, Quagga mussels, and New Zealand mudsnails. A diverse group of partner agencies, including the TahoeRCD, University of Nevada-Reno, University of California-Davis, and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, have collaborated and are dedicated to preventing, monitoring, and controlling AIS in Lake Tahoe.

## How did Curly leaf pondweed get here?

Curlyleaf pondweed was introduced to the United States in the mid-1800s and was spread in waterways by waterfowl migration and intentional planting to increase wildlife habitat. In Lake Tahoe, curlyleaf pondweed has begun to spread rapidly in warm, shallow waters such as the marinas on the South Shore of the lake; it is often spread by plant fragments transported by boats.



Photo credit: Three Lakes council, South Salem, New York

**Origin:** Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia

**Means of Introduction:** Boat transportation of plant fragments

**Habitat:** Quiet waters in ponds, lakes, and streams

**Spread:** Flowers and fruits in late spring and early summer; produces fruits and turions (which germinate in late summer)

**Depth:** Typically grows in less than 3 meters of water

**Characteristics:** Submersed, perennial

**Leaves:** Only species of pondweed with serrate leaves, wavy margins, dark green with reddish hue

**Stems:** Submersed, up to 2 meters in length

## Why is it a threat to the Tahoe Basin?

- ⊖ Fast growing plant that competes to displace diversity and abundance of native plants
- ⊖ Growth of thick mats of vegetation degrades water quality and decreases dissolved oxygen levels
- ⊖ Restricts and impedes recreational activities

## Current Management

In order to prevent the further spread of invasive plants, a variety of monitoring and management techniques are being utilized in Lake Tahoe.

**Bottom Barriers:** Large sheet-like barriers placed on the bottom of the lake to prevent plants from receiving sunlight

**Hand Pulling:** Physical pulling of plants to eliminate localized communities

**Mechanical Dredging:** Site-specific dredging in order to decrease plant mass

## Turion



Photo credit: Leslie Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut

Cat. No. 00-016

UGA5274006