

# Andean Milfoil (Native)

*Myriophyllum quitense*



## Aquatic Native Species Are Under Threat From Aquatic Invasive Species.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) have a direct negative impact not only on human recreation in Lake Tahoe; they also threaten the very existence of native aquatic wildlife. There are currently several invasive plant, invertebrate, mollusk and fish species in the lake. Oftentimes this species out-compete native species for resources, predate on them, and generally degrade water and ecosystem quality. Research, monitoring, and efforts to manage established AIS populations and prevent new AIS infestations are all crucial to protect native aquatic wildlife of the Tahoe Basin. A diverse group of partner agencies, including TahoeRCD, University of Nevada-Reno, University of California-Davis and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, are dedicated to collaborating on these efforts.

## Importance of Andean Milfoil in the Tahoe Basin:

Andean milfoil plays an important role in the Basin ecosystems by providing habitat for native aquatic animal species and stabilizes sediment.



Photo credit: Jenifer Parsons,  
WA State DEP

**Habitat:** Cold, clear and nutrient-poor lakes and rivers

**Characteristics:** Submersed, perennial herb

**Leaves:** Finely divided and feathery underwater leaves 1.5-4 cm in length and up to 2 cm wide occurring in whorls of 2-5. Emergent leaves are blue-green to reddish in whorls of 3-4 around flower spike. They reach 0.5-1 cm in length and are oval to triangular in shape.

**Flowers:** Typically blooms in August and September (later than most milfoils)

**Stems:** Slender underwater stems reaching 1-4 meters in length

**Spread:** Plant fragments (vegetative propagules) and seeds

**Native Distribution:** Western North America, South America, Mexico and Prince Edward Island

## How can I help protect this species?

- ◆ Know your local plants! By being able to identify native from non-native plants, you can avoid disturbing or pulling native species.
- ◆ Check for hitchhikers before you go in the water. Boats (motorized and non-motorized) and watersport equipment can pick up invasive species in other water bodies and inadvertently introduced them to the Basin ecosystem.



Photo credit: Thomas Schmidt