

Canadian Waterweed/Elodea (Native)

Elodea canadensis



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 Canadian Waterweed in the Tahoe Basin:

Canadian Waterweed plays an important role in the Basin ecosystem by providing good habitat for many aquatic invertebrates and cover for young fish and amphibians. It is also a food source for several waterfowl species as well as beaver and muskrat.

Photo credit: Christian Fischer



Habitat: Adapted to a wide range of depths and sediment nutrient levels

Characteristics: Submersed, perennial herb

Leaves: Submersed leaves are bright green, translucent and oblong, reaching 6-17 mm in length and 1-4 mm in width. Whorls of 3 around the stem

Flowers: Small purple or white blossoms in summer that float at the surface

Stems: Delicate stems usually entirely underwater except for flower

Spread: Plant fragments (vegetative propagules) and seeds

Native Distribution: North America, France, Denmark, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Hawaii

Photo credit: Armin Jagil

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 release them in the lake.

