



Parrot-feather watermilfoil (PFW)

(*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)

Originated in South America. Introduced as an ornamental plant in France in 1880 near Bordeaux to test the potential for naturalisation. Present primarily along the Atlantic coast, sporadically in the North, East and near the Mediterranean.

Description

- Perennial, amphibious plant
- Long, knotty stalks up to 3 to 4 metres long, 5 mm in diameter
- Can extend up to 40 cm above the water level
- Adventitious roots
- Leaves are pinnately-divided:
 - whorled in groups of 4, 5 or 6
 - 8 to 30 segments (feather like)
 - light green colour for submergent leaves, length 2.5 to 3.5 cm
 - dark green colour for emergent leaves, length 3.5 to 4 cm
- Sterile single-sex flowers (only female plants have been observed in France):
 - white, very small (1 mm)
 - on very thin, long, white stems, at the axil of leaves
- Root system firmly established in the substrate

Ecology and reproduction

- The preferred habitat is stagnant or lentic waters, exposed to sunlight, e.g. ditches, ponds, slow rivers and wetlands
- Reproduction only via vegetative multiplication, by fragments or cuttings

Documentation

- Hudin S., Vahrameev P. (coord.) 2010. Guide d'identification des plantes exotiques envahissant les milieux aquatiques et les berges du bassin Loire-Bretagne. Fédération des conservatoires d'espaces naturels, 45 pp.
- Fried G. 2012. Guide des plantes invasives. Belin, Paris, 272 pp.
- Muller S. (coord.) 2004. Plantes invasives en France. Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, 168 pp.

Author: Emmanuelle Sarat, IUCN French committee

Classification

Order	Saxifragales
Family	Haloragaceae
Genus	<i>Myriophyllum</i>
Species	<i>M. aquaticum</i> (Verdcourt, 1973)

