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## PARROT FEATHER WATERMILFOIL MANAGEMENT TIPS

Parrot feather watermilfoil is native to the Amazon basin in South America and was introduced into North America through the aquarium trade in the late 1800's. Parrot feather watermilfoil has both an emergent and a submerged growth form. Emergent leaves are stiff, whorled around the stem, and have ten leaflet pairs. Emergent leaves have a waxy cuticle. Leaves of the submergent form are filamentous, reddish orange, and occur in whorls of four to six around the stem. Stems are stout, elongate and suspended in the water column. Small, whitish flowers occur in the axils on emergent shoots. Reproduction of parrot feather watermilfoil occurs primarily by fragmentation.

Parrot feather watermilfoil prefers shallow (up to five feet) and still to slow moving waterbodies with good light. It prefers warm water, but can survive freezing by going dormant. Parrot feather watermilfoil has been reported in western Montana; it is unknown if it will establish in colder parts of the state. It is listed as a Priority 3 Regulated Plant in Montana.



**Parrot feather watermilfoil has a very limited range in Montana at this time. If you think you have found this plant, collect a good-quality sample and contact your local Weed District immediately for positive identification.**

**Effective control measures for the management of parrot feather watermilfoil include:**

- 1. Prevention:** Parrot feather watermilfoil has a very limited distribution in Montana. Therefore, preventing the spread and establishment of new populations of this plant is the highest priority. Early detection and rapid response efforts will be critical if parrot feather watermilfoil spreads to uninfested parts of Montana.
- 2. Mechanical (hand pulling):** Hand pulling and mowing are typically ineffective unless done on a regular basis because the plant readily grows back.
- 3. Herbicide:** **Be sure to always follow directions on the label. The label is the law! In Montana, a 308 permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality is required to intentionally apply aquatic herbicides to water.** Herbicides can be used in some circumstances to control parrot feather watermilfoil, but applying herbicides to surface water safely and effectively requires specialized knowledge and training. Aquatic herbicides usually require two or more hours of contact time with the plant and therefore are ineffective in flowing water.