



BIG-LEAVED PONDWEED

Potamogeton amplifolius



There are 32 other native pondweed species in New York and 28 in Vermont. Big-leaved pondweed is a native aquatic plant that is common through much of North America including Lake Champlain. Its leaves are larger and have more veins than any other pondweed species, and it often grows in somewhat deeper water.

Habitat Preference

Slow-moving streams, rivers, lakes, and farm ponds

Often found in soft sediments in water one-to-several meters deep.

Characteristics:

Vegetative

- Leaf type: made up of one segment (often reddish).
- Leaf shape: widest below the middle and tapering at both ends (lanceolate), strongly arching and ruffled.
- Leaf arrangement: spirally arranged, alternate.
- Leaf position: submerged with some floating leaves.

Flower

- Number of petals/sepals: four; flowers poke up from the surface of the water.
- Color: green.
- Fruit/Seed: dry seed (achene), reddish-brown when mature.





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Cultural History Notes

Used successfully in restoration projects, growing 10-fold in the first season.

Ecological Contributions to Lake Champlain

Biological

- Large nutlets make a valuable waterfowl food.

Chemical

- Decomposition by bacteria and fungi provides food (called “detritus”) for many aquatic invertebrates.

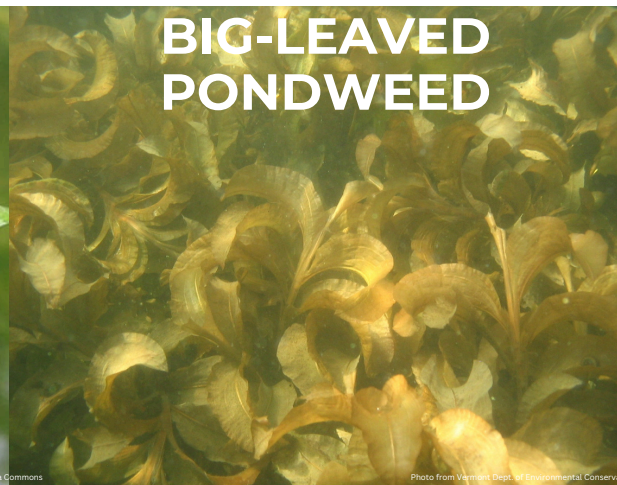
Physical

- Provide habitats for many micro and macro invertebrates.

Similar Species

White-stemmed pondweed (*Potamogeton praelongus*)

- Native aquatic plant found throughout the Lake Champlain basin.
- Large, submersed leaves.
- Spikelet flower that pokes above the water’s surface.



How to differentiate big-leaved pondweed and white-stemmed pondweed

- There are dozens of different pondweed species in the Lake Champlain Basin, and their variable appearance can make differentiation difficult.
- Big-leaved pondweed usually has floating leaves as well as submersed leaves, while white-stemmed pondweed is entirely submersed.



Scan to learn more about Lake Champlain's native aquatic plants!



The Lake Champlain Committee is a watershed-based nonprofit that uses science-based advocacy, education, and collaborative action to protect and restore water quality, safeguard natural habitats and ensure recreational access in the Lake Champlain Basin.



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