

A Non-invasive Aquatic Plant is now calling Coventry Lake home

It seems that a new aquatic plant has found our clear, sparkling waters to be likeable and has established numerous colonies around the shoreline. The new plant is *potamogeton amplifolius* or commonly called large leaf pond weed. It is not an invasive aquatic plant species but actually quite beneficial to fish such as bass, bluegills, and walleye all of which also call Coventry Lake home.

The plant grows from a rhizome and reaches a height up to 6 meters. There are 2 distinct types of leaves on the plant. The submerged large leaves are fairly translucent, slightly wavy, and have many (up to 45) veins visible. The surface leaves that float on the top of the water are currently visible. These surface leaves are smaller with a flat, oval, leathery look.. Large leaf pond weed has currently been flowering around our shoreline so is quite noticeable. The flower is on a slender stalk with about 16 whorls of 4-petal lobes. These plants mature in late June early July thus their cycle is almost complete and will soon start to die down. Although it is beneficial to the fish population some people may not enjoy having it in their swim areas. One control option for large leaf pond weed is to harvest it – making sure the rhizome is pulled.

Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station (CAES) conducted a survey of the Coventry Lake in 2008 identifying all aquatic plants. At that time 2 invasive aquatic plants had been found in very small amounts, *Potamogeton crispus* (curly leaf pond weed) and *Myriophyllum spicatum* (Eurasian milfoil). A new survey was started July 1 and the field work was completed by July 11. The full survey results will be available sometime over winter. The initial report is that larger amounts of Eurasian milfoil and some curly leaf pond weed have been found by the survey team.

Two excellent sources to learn more and find pictures is www.ct.gov/caes/ or <https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org/>.

Help keep our lake healthy.. Check for hitchhikers on your boat and trailers – remove any vegetation and wash your boat. Dispose of any aquatic plants that wash up on the shore by drying them thoroughly and then disposing of them.