

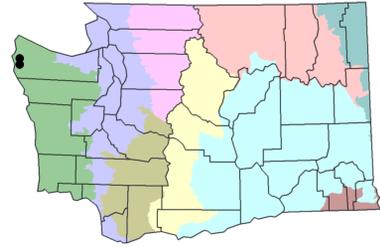
Sparganium fluctuans (Morong) B.L. Rob.

water bur-reed

Sparganiaceae - bur-reed family

status: State Threatened, USFS strategic

rank: G5 / S1



General Description: Adapted from Douglas et al. (1998-2002): Aquatic perennial herb from long rhizomes; stems usually submerged and 0.8-1.5 m long. Leaves alternate, limp, unkeeled, usually floating, linear, ribbonlike, 0.6-1 m x 3-11 mm.

Floral Characteristics: Inflorescence branched, composed of 2-4 female heads below and 1-6 male heads above. Female heads are 1.5-2.3 cm wide and subtended by conspicuous leaflike bracts. Perianth segments 6, spoon-shaped, often with a dark spot on the tips. Stigma solitary.

Fruits: Achenes 2-5 mm long, sometimes constricted at the middle, tapering to a curved beak 2-3.5 mm. Identifiable July to August.

Identification Tips: *Sparganium angustifolium* achenes are reddish to brownish at the base with straight or slightly curved beaks. The achenes of *S. emersum* are greenish at the base with straight or slightly curved beaks. In contrast, the achenes of *S. fluctuans* are dark reddish brown with strongly curved beaks. Additionally, the main stem of *S. fluctuans* is usually branched and the tepals are attached near the middle of the fruit stalk, while the main stems of *S. angustifolium* and *S. emersum* are unbranched and the tepals are attached near the base of the fruit stalk.

Range: Circumpolar: southern Canada south to PA and NJ in eastern N.A., and to WA and ID in western N.A.

Habitat/Ecology: Ponds, lakeshores, and slow-moving streams in lowland and montane zones. Commonly in quiet, cold, acidic to neutral waters that are low in nutrients and organic matter, up to 2 m deep (but usually less). In WA this taxon grows on a gentle sloping lakeshore in organic to sandy substrates at 8 m (30 ft) elevation. Associated species include watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum* spp.) and pondweeds (*Potamogeton richardsonii*, *Potamogeton natans*).

Comments: This taxon is also rare in B.C., Alberta, Sask., Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, VT, NY, MA, and CT.

References: Douglas et al. 1998-2002, vol. 7; Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 22.



photo by University of Washington Herbarium



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