

## Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)



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**Description:** Hydrilla is a rooted aquatic plant with leaves up to .75 inches long. The leaves are usually in whorls of five oblong leaves on the stems with fine teeth visible to the naked eye on leaf edges and midribs. The flowers of hydrilla are tiny and white to translucent and are produced in late summer and fall.

### Control Methods:

#### 1: Mechanical treatment

Mechanical aquatic weed harvesters provide temporary relief and open boating lanes, but resulting plant fragments can result in further spread of the weed.

#### 2: Chemical treatment

Contact herbicides provide temporary control, but systemic herbicides provide more long-term control. There are three EPA-registered herbicides that are effective against for use in treating hydrilla. These are fluridone (Sonar™), endothall (Aquathol®), and copper compounds. Fluridone is a systemic herbicide that has proven effective against hydrilla in Florida and other states. The drawbacks to using fluridone include its high cost, slow action, and non-selectivity toward other macrophyte species. Endothall, a fast-acting contact herbicide, is used when immediate control of vegetation is needed. Copper compounds are often used in conjunction with endothall applications, although copper by itself exhibits herbicidal action against hydrilla. Copper is used for its algaecide properties when heavy periphytic growth on the hydrilla may interfere with herbicide uptake. These herbicides do not affect hydrilla seeds, tubers, and turions and repeated applications are needed to control hydrilla re-growth. However, copper is toxic to fish and aquatic macroinvertebrates. The concentrations of copper compounds found in endothall herbicides are at or above the level toxic to fish and macroinvertebrates.