



Photo from Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation



PICKERELWEED

Pontederia cordata

Habitat Preference

Unconsolidated sediments of streams, lakes, and ponds.

Characteristics

Vegetative

Simple, heart-shaped leaves 60-220 millimeters long. Arranged alternately at the base. *Petioles* (14) extend from the submersed base above the water.

Flower

Six petals, violet to blue colored. Has *tristylly* (23) breeding system that produces three distinct types of flowers on different plants.

Fruit

Dry, flattened fruit round at the cross-section; four to six millimeters long, two to three millimeters wide; one seed within the fruit.

Ecological Contributions to Lake Champlain

- Insects seek nectar from the flowering pickerelweed, while waterfowl eat seeds and mammals eat foliage.
- Root base of the plant covers sediments with a tough vegetative mat which can affect release of chemicals.
- Stems and leaves act as a buffer to protect and stabilize the lakeshore. While there is no direct tie to its namesake fish the pickerel, an array of wildlife use the foliage of the pickerelweed for covered shelter.



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