

Water Celery (*Vallisneria Americana*)

Water Celery, native to eastern North America, is an important aquatic plant in the Hudson River. Its long leaves stay submerged under the water and provide shelter and nutrients for aquatic life.

Water celery has an interesting way of pollinating: the female flower rests on the top of the water, creating a depression on the surface. When the male flower is released, it rises to the water surface and floats around until it falls into the depression and fertilizes the female flower. As the seeds mature, a stalk is formed and sinks into the water where it opens and disperses the seeds.

Ornamental gardeners often use this attractive plant; however, like many fast-growing species, it can become weedy when introduced into new areas, so care must be taken to only plant it in its native habitats.



Physical Characteristics:

- Long, ribbon-like leaves
- Leaves are about 1/2 inch wide and can reach up to 6 feet long
- Flowers July-September on the surface on corkscrew-shaped stalks

Location:

- Lakes, streams, and wetlands
- Beneath the surface of still or slow-moving water
- Native to Eastern North America
- Also found throughout North America and many countries in South America and Asia.

Also Known As:

- Tape Grass
- Eel Grass
- Flumine-Mississippi

Benefits

- Oxygenates water
- Provides food for aquatic life
- Provides good spawning habitat
- Helps build marshes

Concerns

- Spreads very quickly when not contained
- Can take over lakes if introduced to a new body of water