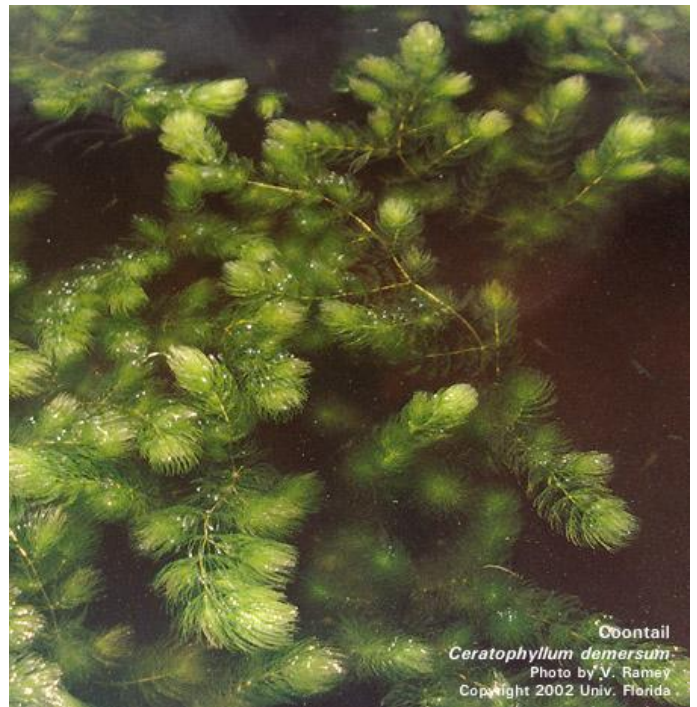


Coontail

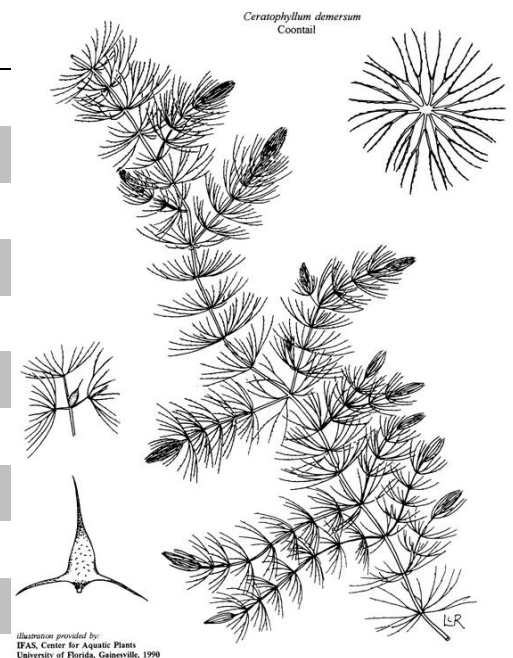
[*Ceratophyllum demersum*]

DESCRIPTION

Coontail is a submersed plant. It has no roots, and so is free-floating. It grows in sluggish waters, and stems can reach lengths of >15 ft. The feathery leaves are arranged in whorls on the stem (which can resemble a raccoon's tail). The fan-shaped leaves are best observed in the water, and area arranged in whorls of 5 or more. Each leaf is $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ in. long, and is dissected into linear segments that are toothed on one edge. These tiny teeth give the plant a rough feel when pulled through the hand. The leaves could also be classified as "feathery" because each leaf is divided into many narrow segments. Coontail's flowers are very small, sessile in the leaf axils and remain completely submersed. Coontail can grow in deep water, so deep that it may not be evident from the surface of the water. Coontail will occur in environments similar to those preferred by hydrilla and slender naiad.



CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION
Growth Season	annual
Growth Habit	floating, submersed
Leaflet Number	
Leaf Margin	toothed, serrated
Leaf Hairs	
Leaf/Leaflet Shape	finely dissected
Leaf Length	
Leaf Arrangement	whorled around the stem
Root Type	absent
Flower Color	





coontail



coontail

Publication Copyright Information:

© North Carolina State University. Text and photographs for these information sheets was prepared by Rob Richardson, Bridget Lassiter, Gail Wilkerson, and Steve Hoyle. Department of Crop Science, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, North Carolina State University. Prepared April 2008. This publication was made possible through a seed grant (University Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development Grant) administered by North Carolina State University.

References:

Line drawings:

University of Florida/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants. Used with permission. Available online from <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/slidecol.html>

Text:

Aulback-Smith, C. A., and de Kozlowski, S. J. 1996. Aquatic and Wetland Plants of South Carolina. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.