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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Hydrilla verticillata* CONFIRMED in TIOGA COUNTY**

*Hydrilla verticillata*, a highly invasive aquatic plant, has recently been confirmed in a small, damned pond off the Little Naticoke Creek in Owego, NY. The plant is characterized by its ability to dominate a waterbody and alter the physical and chemical features. The plant blocks



Hydrilla in Tioga County, NY. Photo credit: Dylan Hurd

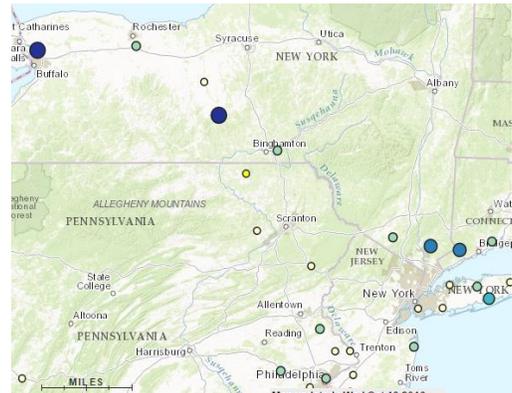
sunlight due to the growth of thick mats which displaces native vegetation (nyis.info). The Finger Lakes region has just four other confirmed sightings of Hydrilla- the first is located in an isolated pond in Broome County, two managed populations occur in Cayuga Lake (Tompkins County and Cayuga County) and finally, a managed infestation is located in a small pond in Monroe County.



Hydrilla from Tioga County, NY. Photo credit: Dylan Hurd

Native to Korea, Hydrilla can be found invading freshwater lakes, ponds,

and rivers, and canals. It has pointed, bright green leaves that grow in a whorl along the stem. Typically in New York, there are five leaves per whorl. The margins of the leaf are serrated and at the base of the stem is a small, potato-like tuber which grows in the sediment. The tubers allow Hydrilla to overwinter in our NY climate. According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, Hydrilla is common in the upper Chesapeake Bay and most freshwater tributaries, although this is the first observation in the Upper Susquehanna watershed in NY. The infestation in Owego, NY is located ½ mile north of the Susquehanna River where Hydrilla has great potential to spread to downstream. Further survey is needed in this area. FL-PRISM and partners are working together to develop a rapid response implementation plan for control, outreach, and coordination of this newly discovered infestation in an important watershed.



USGS NAS Map of current Hydrilla infestations in NY, PA, and NJ. Available here: <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/viewer/ommap.aspx>

Help #StoptheInvasion! Volunteers are asked to **DOCUMENT** any suspicious invasive by taking multiple pictures and marking the area with GPS points. **REPORT** your finding to [FLPRISM@gmail.com](mailto:FLPRISM@gmail.com) or in iMapInvasives. **STOP THE SPREAD** by knowing what to look for. Check out the [fingerlakesinvasives.org](http://fingerlakesinvasives.org) website or <http://nyis.info> for more information on this organism or other invasives.



Hydrilla from Tioga County, NY. Photo credit: Dylan Hurd