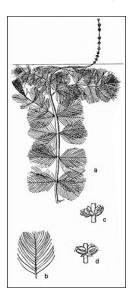# How to limit the spread of Eurasian water-milfoil (Spiked water-milfoil), a plant that is invading our waterways?

The Eurasian water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is an aquatic plant that can grow in different water bodies. They can survive in all conditions, but prefer **shallow water rich in nutrients**. Given its invasive nature, this exotic plant is a nuisance to and detrimental for our waterways.

The Eurasian water-milfoil is hardy and spreads through cuttings, root suckers or seeds, rapidly covering large areas of the lake. The pieces that fall off or are torn from the plant develop their own roots and may quickly establish themselves wherever the current takes them. They can survive without water for several days and displace existing plants requiring similar sites and nutrition.

Once established, it is very difficult to eradicate. There are no miracle solutions but it is important to control its spreading and avoid conditions that would contribute to its growth and development.

Source: Crow and Hellquist, 2000

Source : Trousse des lacs, CRE Laurentides, 2007

Here are some suggestions:

Shore dwellers

YOUR OBJECTIVE: Reduce the input of nutrients into the lake
- Don't use fertilizers near lakes and rivers
- Use detergents that do not contain phosphates
- Ensure that you have a proper septic system and that is in good order
- Maintain or replant a proper **shoreline vegetation**

Boaters

YOUR OBJECTIVE: Don't contribute to the spreading of the Eurasian water-milfoil
- Learn to recognize them.
- **Avoid disturbing the lake bottom and don't circulate in infested areas** (but if you must, lift the motor out of the water and ensure that no plants have been snagged by the foot).
- **Don't remove plants from the water** as fragments can easily establish themselves elsewhere. Collect only floating pieces and put them into a garbage pail.
- To avoid contaminating other lakes, **wash the inside (motor and other parts) and outside of the boat (or seaplane), the trailer, oars or any other equipment.**

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