

Naiad Species Comparisons Chart

NAIAD SPECIES	LEAF SERRATIONS	LEAF BASES	LEAF FORM	SEEDS
slender naiad <i>Najas flexilis</i> (common native)	Very fine serrations (actually spines) are often hard to see, even with a good hand lens. Each side of the leaf has 20 to 100 minute spines.	Leaves broaden gently where they meet the stem (like sloped shoulders).	Slender leaves (0.2 to 1 mm wide) are somewhat stiff, and tend to arch backward as they mature.	Seeds straight lengthwise. Faint pits on seeds are longer than they are wide (elongate along the length of the seed).
thread-like naiad <i>Najas gracillima</i> (rare native)	Fine serrations (actually spines) are generally visible with a good hand lens. Each side of the leaf has 13 to 17 minute spines.	Leaf bases blocky, bulging out abruptly, with a fringed or jagged margin along the upper side.	Very slender thread-like leaves (generally less than 0.2 mm wide) are flimsy, and do not arch backward.	Seeds straight lengthwise. Pits on seeds are longer than they are wide (elongate along the length of the seed).
European naiad <i>Najas minor</i> (invasive)	Small serrations are generally visible without magnification. Each side of the leaf has 7 to 15 small spines.	Leaf bases blocky, bulging out abruptly, with a fringed or jagged margin along the upper side.	Slender leaves (0.3 to 0.5 mm wide) are somewhat stiff, and tend to arch backward as they mature.	Seeds slightly curved lengthwise. The pits on the seeds are wider than they are long (elongate around the girth of the seed).

