

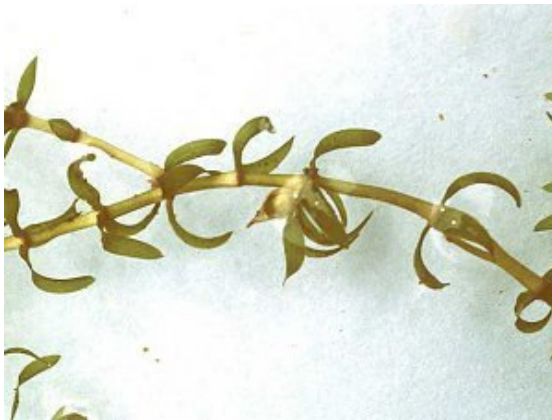
Elodea

Elodea canadensis

-Elodea has slender stems that emerge from shallow rootstalks. The small, lance-shaped leaves attach directly to the stem. Leaves are in whorls of three, or occasionally only two and ten to be more crowded toward the stem tips. The branching stems often form a tangled mat.

-The male and female flowers are on separate plants. Female flowers have three small white petals with a waxy surface that improves flotation. They are raised to the surface on a long, slender stalk. Male flowers develop in a vase-like structure called a spathe that is 7-10 mm long. At maturity, the male flowers are also raised to the surface on thread-like stalks. There the anthers split open, releasing the pollen to drift away and possibly fertilize the female flowers. However, male plants are quite rare. So although you may see dozens of tiny white flower floating above a bed of Elodea, they are usually all female flowers that will not produce seeds.

-Elodea was one of the first submersed aquatic plants that I could recognize as a child. Furthermore, it is always a good sign to find some of this floating in the water underneath the hole when ice-fishing.



**Slow efts about the edges sleep;
Swift darting water-flies
Shoot on the surface; down the deep
Fast following bubbles rise.**

**Look down. What groves that scarcely sway!
What 'wood obscure' profound!
What jungle! Where some beast of prey
Might choose his vantage ground.**

-Austin Dobson