

*Elodea nuttallii*

[Synonyms : *Anacharis nuttallii*, *Anacharis occidentalis*, *Elodea columbiana*, *Elodea minor*, *Elodea occidentalis*, *Elodea verticillata*, *Hydrilla verticillata*, *Philotria angustifolia*, *Philotria minor*, *Philotria nuttallii*, *Philotria occidentalis*, *Udora verticillata* var. *minor*, *Vallisneria verticillata*]

**NUTTALL'S WATERWEED** is a submerged freshwater aquatic perennial. Native to North America, it has small, white flowers.

It is also known as *Elodea di Nuttall* (Italian), *Élodée à feuilles étroites* (French), *Élodée de Nuttall* (French), Free flowered waterweed, *Kokanadamo* (Japanese), Nuttall's pondweed, *Nuttalls Wasserpest* (German), Nuttall's water-thyme, *Nuttall-wasserpest* (German), *Peste d'acqua di Nuttall* (Italian), *St. John-wasserpest* (German), *Schmalblättrige Wasserpest* (German), Slender waterweed, *Smalbladet vandpest* (Danish), *Smalle waterpest* (Dutch), *Smal vattenpest* (Swedish), *Vodní mor americký* (Czech), *Vodomor Nuttalov* (Slovak), Water weed, Western elodea, and Western waterweed.

*Nuttallii* commemorates an English printer, botanist, plant collector and ornithologist, Thomas Nuttall (1786-1859), who attracted the title 'the father of Western American botany'. He collected plants in the United States from about 1808 until just before the outbreak of the Anglo-American War of 1812-1815 which enabled a brief return to England with many plant species which had until then evaded the scientific community. Returning to the United States at War's end he again collected plants and from 1825-1834 was curator of the botanical gardens at Harvard University. At the same time he published works on plants, his travels, and ornithology. But Nuttall had itchy feet. He joined another expedition going out West under the leadership of the American explorer, Nathaniel Jarvis Wyeth (1802-1856), then visited Hawaii and returned to explore the Pacific Northwest. From 1836-1841 he worked for what is now the The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia after which he finally returned to England to accept an inheritance following an uncle's death and there published, in particular, a work on North American trees. His many published works include *The Genera of North American plants* (1818), *A Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory* (1821), *The North American Sylva* (1849), and *Descriptions of and observations on some species of Rhododendron* (1853).

Nuttall's waterweed has both positive and negative qualities. On the one hand it provides food for the aquatic world and can also be used as a green manure. On the other hand it can be invasive as it can block irrigation channels.

It is understood that Nuttall's waterweed was only introduced to Britain as recently as 1966.