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### *Najas flexilis*

[Synonyms : *Caulinia flexilis*, *Fluvialis flexilis*, *Naias flexilis*, *Najas caespitosus*, *Najas canadensis*, *Najas flexilis* subsp. *caespitosus*, *Najas flexilis* var. *congesta*, *Najas flexilis* var. *robusta*]

**SLENDER NAIAD** is a submerged aquatic annual. Native to eastern North America, it has tiny green flowers.

It is also known as *Aibhneag* (Scots Gaelic), *Biegsames Nixenkraut* (German), Bushy pondweed, Flexible naiad, Grassy naiad, *Liden Najade* (Danish), Mermaid weed, *Mjukt havfrugras* (Norwegian), Nodding waternymph, Northern naiad, Northern water nymph, *Notkeanäkinruoho* (Finnish), *Sjönajas* (Swedish), *Sjösärv* (Swedish), Slender water nymph, Water nymph, and Wavy waternymph.

It is a protected plant in the Irish Republic under the Flora Protection Order 1987, and it is also protected in Britain under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

*Flexilis* is Latin (bent, flexible, pliant, supple) meaning ‘pliant, flexible or limber’.

Young leaf shoots can be eaten raw or cooked like watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*).

Waterfowl eat the tiny glossy, pale brown seeds.

The whole plant is harvested locally for use as either a manure or (after careful drying) a packing material suitable particularly for crated goods.

Slender naiad offers shelter for small fish which is often appreciated by fishermen. It is also valued in garden ponds as it helps to oxygenate the water