



# Whatcom Weeds

Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board 322 N. Commercial St Bellingham WA 98225  
(360) 778-6234 [www.whatcomcounty.us/914/Weeds](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/914/Weeds)

## COMMON MARE'S-TAIL

*Hippuris vulgaris*

**NATURAL HISTORY:** Mare's-tail is an aquatic plant native to North America, Asia and Europe. It grows in shallow water or muddy banks of streams, lakes and ponds and rises several inches above the water surface. Mare's-tail can be found in fresh and brackish water, and occasionally grows in water as deep as 6 feet. It spreads by seed and by creeping rhizomes, and can regenerate from plant fragments. Waterfowl and shorebirds eat the seeds, and occasionally the vegetation. It sometimes grows in dense stands.

**DESCRIPTION:** Mare's-tail is an aquatic or amphibious perennial. The hollow, unbranched stems can grow up to 3 feet long, with the emergent stem growing up to 8" long. The leaves are arranged in whorls of 6 to 12 leaves, around the stem. The form of the leaves and stem vary, whether they are under or above the water. The underwater sections are limp with pale green leaves up to 3" long, while the emergent portions are stiff and erect, with shorter, dark green leaves (up to 1" long) and, often, reddish stems. The small, inconspicuous flowers are borne at the leaf bases, on the emergent stems. Mare's-tail flowers in mid-summer.

**MANAGEMENT OPTIONS:** For site-specific control recommendations, contact the weed control board.

