

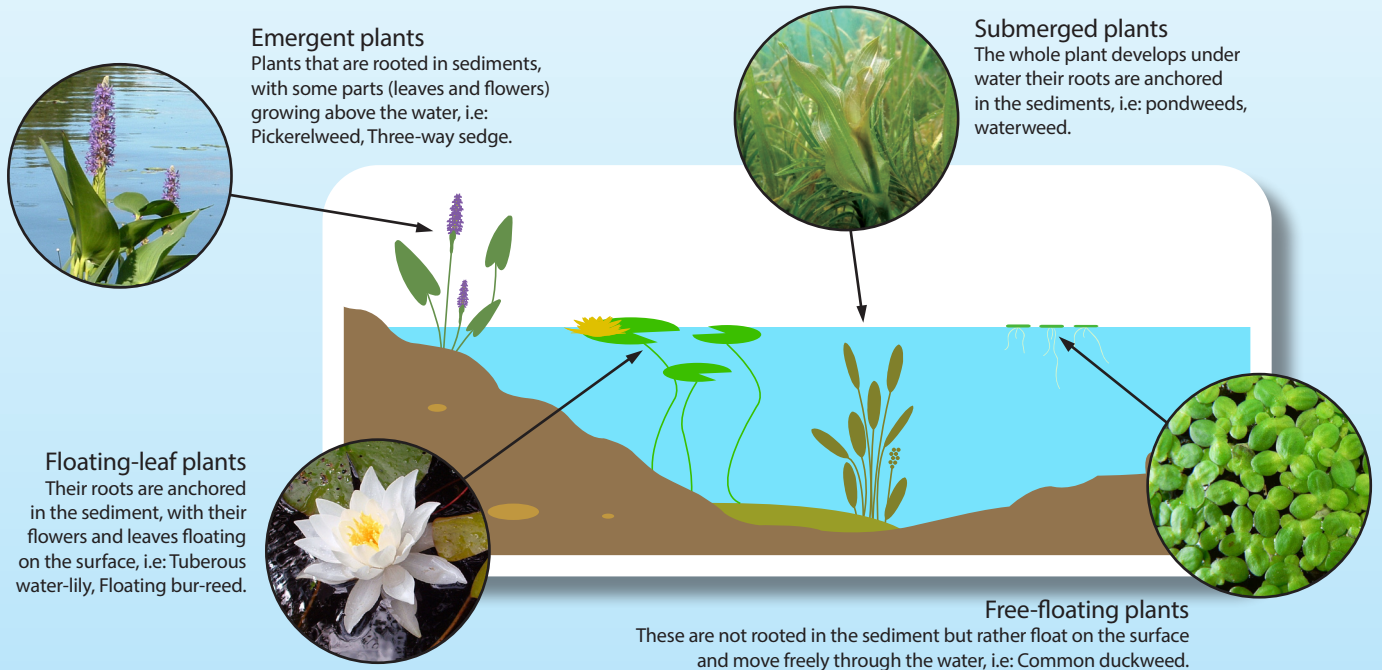
# A Green World in a Watery Universe!

We can identify two life forms that contribute to the health of a lake, algae and aquatic plants. Algae are usually microscopic organisms without roots. Aquatic plants, also known as macrophytes, are visible to the naked eye, living under water, or near the shore.

## Aquatic vegetation maintains ecosystem functions :

- Provides food, shelter, and reproduction areas for aquatic wildlife.
- Filters water by absorbing excess nutrients.
- Buffers wave action and protects shorelines from erosion.
- Stabilizes sediment with their root systems.
- Leaf cover helps to stabilize temperatures in the littoral zone

There are four categories of aquatic plants:



**Harmful invasive species:**  
Eurasian watermilfoil is a submerged species that is not native to Québec. It has adapted to our environment and has few natural predators. It can invade lakes, threaten native species.

Be careful not to confuse it with Whitish watermilfoil, which is a native species that represents no danger to the environment.



More than 12 segments

Eurasian watermilfoil  
(*Myriophyllum spicatum*)



11 segments or less

Common watermilfoil  
(*Myriophyllum sibiricum*)



It is normal that the growth rate of aquatic plants to fluctuate amongst seasons and year to year. To prevent their proliferation, nutrients loading (the addition of phosphorus and nitrogen inputs) must be limited.

Many actions can be taken :

- Preserve the shoreline's natural vegetation.
- Avoid using fertilizers (even organic).
- Make sure that your septic system meets regulatory requirements and have it emptied regularly.
- Use phosphate-free domestic products.