

Lemna minor



lesser duckweed

Family	Lemnaceae		
Origin	Native		
WIS Code	OBL	CoC	4

DESCRIPTION

Lemna minor is a diminutive floating aquatic perennial plant. Lacking stems, this plant is only a leaf-like thallus having one to five rounded segments (2 to 5 mm in diameter) with a single root from each segment. Larger populations of



© Donald Cameron

L. minor appear to form a bright green mat across the water surface.

FLOWERS AND FRUITS

Summer. Flowers and fruits are rarely produced. This plant reproduces vegetatively, and spreads quickly reproducing rapidly in eutrophic (high nutrient) waters such as farm ponds or drainages. Its winter buds detach and sink to remain dormant during cold temperatures.

HABITAT

Still or stagnant waters of streams, marshes, ponds and ditches.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Spirodela polyrrhiza, greater duckweed, is larger than *L. minor*, and has a reddish underside and seven to 20 hanging roots. There are three rare species of *Lemna* in West Virginia, plus two species of the much smaller *Wolffia*, watermeal. *Wolffia* is the tiniest of all flowering plants and it lacks roots.

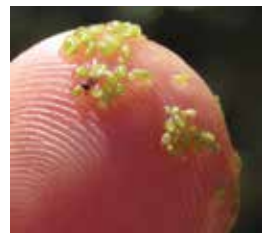


Lemna minor

© Lada Malek



Spirodela polyrrhiza



© Mark D Reed

Wolffia sp.

© Rob Curtis