Ceratophyllum demersum

coon’s tail, hornwort

**Family**  Ceratophyllaceae  
**Origin**  Native  
**WIS Code**  OBL  CoC 5

**DESCRIPTION**
This submerged aquatic perennial lacks roots but is sometimes found buried in soft mucky water bottoms. Stiff branching stems (1 to 2 m long) with opposite leaves circle the stem. The leaves project a feathery appearance under water. Teeth along the leaf margins are easily seen and evenly spaced.

**FLOWERS AND FRUITS**
July to September. Single flowers are found in the leaf axils (where leaf meets stem). Fruits are oval and 4-7 mm long with three spines. Vegetative reproduction is common with this species, as stem pieces break off from the main plant and float to new locations to grow and spread.

**HABITAT**
Slow moving streams and ponds. It can sometimes be a nuisance in farm ponds from overabundance.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**
The aquatic genus *Myriophyllum*, water milfoil, has four species (one is non-native) found in West Virginia. The stems and leaves have the same feathery look underwater as *Ceratophyllum demersum*, but a close peek at the leaves shows a compound leaf pattern giving each leaf a comb-like look.