



Polygonum hydropiperoides

swamp smartweed

Family Polygonaceae

Origin Native

WIS Code OBL CoC 4

DESCRIPTION

Spreading via rhizomes (underground stems) and rooting at leaf nodes (where leaves emerge from stems), this perennial often creates large colonies along muddy water edges. The sprawling branching stems have papery sheaths just above the swollen leaf nodes. Sheaths turn brown and have long bristle hairs along the upper edge. Leaves (5-15 cm long) are mostly smooth, lance-shaped, toothless and tapering to a pointed tip.

FLOWERS AND FRUITS

May through September. Flowers are clustered along spike-like stalks at the top of the plant stem and sometimes at the leaf axils (where leaf meets stem) in the upper plant. The small flowers are greenish white to pink and flowers do not open all at the same time.

HABITAT

Seepage swamps, depression ponds, beaver ponds, marshes, stream banks, sand and gravel bars.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Polygonum cespitosum var. *longisetum*, Oriental lady's thumb, is an invasive annual with fibrous roots (not long rhizomes) and has fine hairs sticking out from the flower clusters.



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Polygonum cespitosum var. *longisetum*