

Water primrose

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Species Description

Scientific name: *Ludwigia grandiflora*

AKA: Often incorrectly identified as *L. peploides* and labelled in garden centres as *Jussiaea*

Native to: South America

Habitat: Still or slow-flowing water

Quite distinctive in floating form, more care is needed to distinguish it from other species when it is growing in the margins of water bodies. Best searched for when in flower (July to August). Spreads primarily by plant fragmentation but also by seeds.

Introduced to Europe as an ornamental and water garden plant. Large accumulations of this species can lead to a depletion of oxygen levels in the water while also competing with native species for space and resources. It further releases chemicals that suppress other organisms (allelopathy), leading to the accumulation of toxins and the poisoning of entire water ecosystems. This species has been linked to significant losses in biodiversity at impacted sites. It is not present in Northern Ireland.

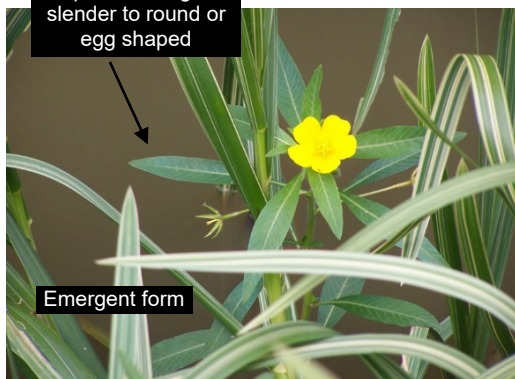
***Ludwigia grandiflora* is listed under the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation 143/2014 and it is therefore an offence to intentionally keep; grow or cultivate; transport to, from or within Northern Ireland, use or exchange; or release into the environment.**



Key ID Features



Leaves can vary in shape from long and slender to round or egg shaped



Emergent form

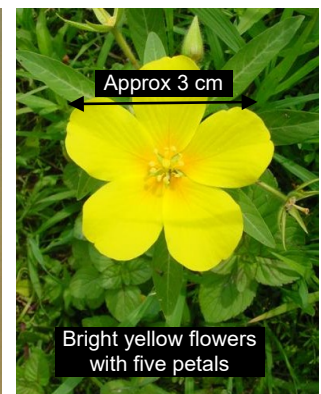


Floating form

Leaves arranged alternately on stem

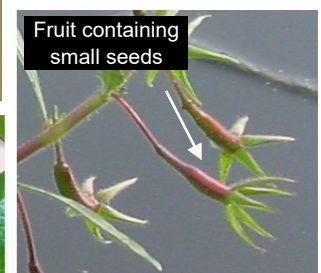
Stems can be smooth or hairy

Stems fleshy and grow to between 20 cm and 300 cm long



Approx 3 cm

Bright yellow flowers with five petals



Fruit containing small seeds



Dark green with a lighter green central vein (midrib)

Report any sightings via; CEDaR Online Recording - <https://www2.habitas.org.uk/records/ISI>, iRecord app or Invasive Species Northern Ireland website - <http://invasivespeciesni.co.uk/report-sighting>

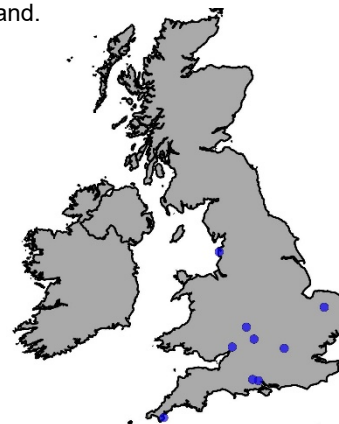
Identification throughout the year

Flowers from July to August. Vegetation dies back in winter leaving distinctive brown stems.



Distribution

Not present in Northern Ireland. Recorded at site scattered across England.



Source NBN atlas;

<https://species.nbnatlas.org/species/NHMSYS0000460478>

Check website for current distribution

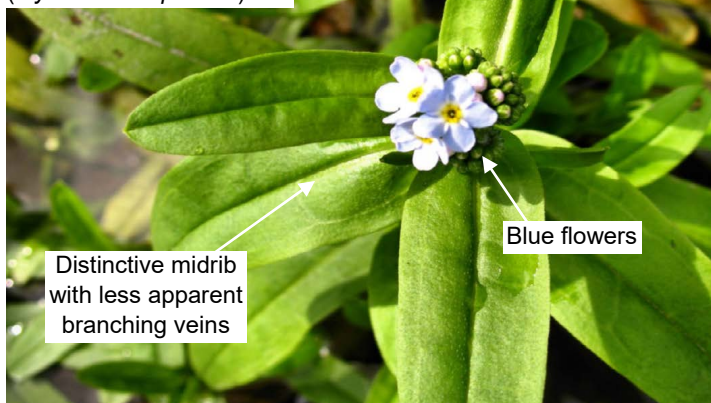
Similar Species

There are few similar species with which Water Primrose could be confused. The leaves of aquatic forget-me-nots (*Myosotis* species) have a distinctive midrib with less distinctive branching veins, unlike Water Primrose. When the floating leaves of amphibious bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*) first appear they resemble Water Primrose, but are significantly larger when full grown with dissimilar flowers. Hampshire purslane (*Ludwigia palustris*) is a very rare plant of boggy areas. Although closely related to Water Primrose, it is considerably smaller.

Water forget-me-not

Native

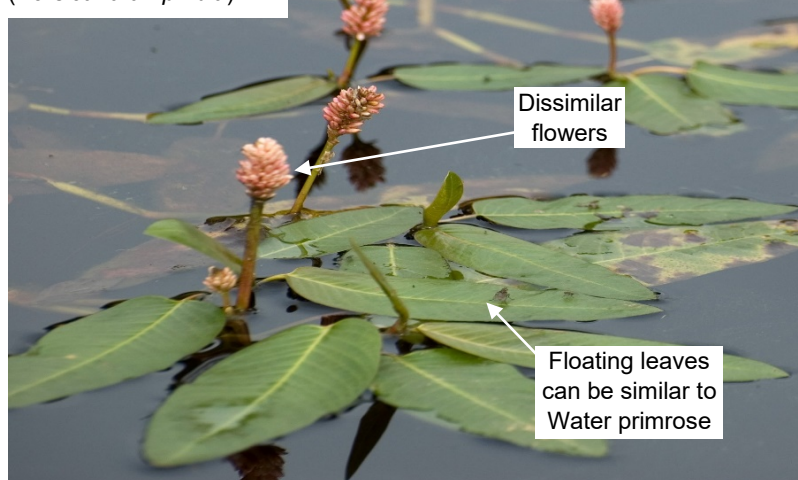
(*Myosotis scorpioides*)



Amphibious bistort

Native

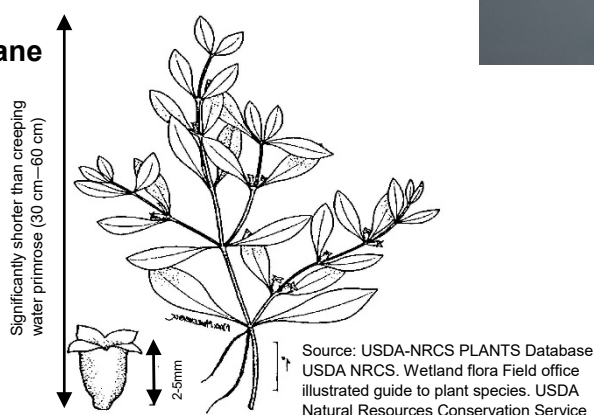
(*Persicaria amphibia*)



Hampshire-purslane

Native

(*Ludwigia palustris*)



References and further reading:

Blamey, M, Fitter, R and Fitter, A (2003) "The Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland. The Complete Guide to the British and Irish Flora".

A & C Black Defra (2007). "Eradication strategies for invasive non-native *Ludwigia* species—PH0422". Defra
Preston, C D, Pearman, D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) "New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora". Oxford University Press

Stace, C (1999) "Field Flora of the British Isles". Cambridge University Press

Photos from: Stephen Buchan, Alain Dutartre, Niall Moore, William Olsen, Donna Storz.

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

Adapted for Northern Ireland
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