ECHINODORUS BERTEROI (Sprengel) Fassett.
Burhead

FAMILY: Alismataceae

SYNONYMS: Echinodorus rostratus; Echinodorus cordifolius, misapplied (see Comments).

HABIT: Aquatic or semi-aquatic herbaceous annual, scape erect, 5-50 cm.; but in Ohio more likely 10 cm. or less; flowering June-October; fruiting July-October.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Non-flowering material of Echinodorus closely resembles several species of Sagittaria. Flowering or fruiting material, however, is easily distinguished. Echinodorus is rather conspicuous in fruit; the spiny appearance of the fruiting head is very different from the fruiting heads of Sagittaria.

TOTAL RANGE: C. America and W.I. to CA, TX, and n. in the Mississippi river drainage to OH, IL, and SD.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Butler, Hamilton, Pickaway, Ross, and Warren counties. There are pre-1980 records from Pike County.

HABITAT: Muddy shores and shallow water of lakes, ponds, slow-moving streams, and ditches, also in swamp woods and river bottoms.

HAZARDS: Draining, filling, or any other alteration of the wetland habitat.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but probably poor. It seems to be less tolerant of disturbance than other Ohio members of the family.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification.

COMMENTS: When in fruit, this species is conspicuous and easily identified. The close similarity of the leaves, however, to the common arrowheads (Sagittaria spp.) may lead to its being overlooked. It well may be more frequent than the records indicate. It should be sought throughout western Ohio.

In a treatment by Fassett (1955), used by some subsequent authors, this species becomes E. berteroi var. lanceolatus (see Synonyms). Earlier authors also apparently misapplied the name E. cordifolius to this plant. Some authors have split Echinodorus into formae based upon leaf shape. These appear to be trivial growth forms or responses to environments with no taxonomic relevance.

SELECTED REFERENCES:


Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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