

Pontederiaceae pickerelweed family

All perennial herbs, the nine genera of 30 species are mostly subtropical and tropical, associated with wetlands or water. A single colonial aquatic species reaches Nova Scotia. Its glossy cordate leaves reach above the shallows in which it grows. Flowers are purple, borne in an erect spike above the water, 3–7cm long. Flowers are cleft into two limbs, the upper limb has three lobes, connate for half their length. The lower has three lobes, nearly separate from each other.

***Pontederia* L.** **Pickerelweed**

Described above.

***Pontederia cordata* L.** **Pickerelweed; pontédérie cordée**



Photo by David Mazerolle

A robust plant, generally growing in large colonies, emerging from pond or lacustrine shallows. The flowering stems are upwards of 50cm tall, terminating in a spike 2–3cm thick. Flower colour is violet-blue although lighter and darker shades and hues are also seen. The leaves are variable in length and width, but all are attached by a wide sheath, differentiated from the thickened and grooved petiole.

Flowers and seeds produced from June through November.

Usually found on the mucky margins of lakes and ponds, or even sluggish streams. Colonial.

Frequent throughout but for northern Cape Breton.

Ranges from NS to ON, south to FL and TX; OR.



Photo by Sean Blaney