

Elatinaceae

waterwort family

A single species of these tiny herbaceous creeping plants reaches Nova Scotia. Worldwide there are only 40 species. Sprawling stems bear erect branches, with whorled or opposite leaves. Axillary flowers are solitary or in cymes. Flowers are regular, 2–5-merous, with one or two series of stamens. Fruits are capsules, with many seeds.

Elatine L.

waterwort

Small sessile flowers bear two or four petals. Seeds have shallow pits or dents on their surface. They are tiny creeping plants on mucky soil, sometimes even submerged rendering them often overlooked.

Elatine minima (Nutt.) Fischer & CA Meyer

Waterwort; élatine naine



Photo by Sean Blaney

These tiny, fleshy squat annuals are less than 4cm tall and may form dense mats. Each plant produces 5–10 pairs of opposite obovate or round leaves. Flowers are two-merous. Flowers and fruits often when less than 1cm tall.

Flowers produced July to October.

Under water at lower shorelines in damp sand.

Widespread and found wherever suitable habitat is present.

NL to ON, south to IL and NC.