



DEAR Field Keys

Utricularia

Introduction

Utricularia is a genus of carnivorous, aquatic (free floating) and semi-aquatic (attached to wetland soil) plants. *Utricularias* typically form mats or colonies and produce small bladders that trap and digest tiny aquatic organisms. The vegetative parts of *Utricularia* are not clearly separated into roots, stems, and leaves, and can be best described as having dissected “branches” that take different forms depending on the species. Flowers are two-lipped and either yellow, purple, or white. There are 14 species of *Utricularia* native to Florida. This key covers the 9 species found occasionally to frequently in Lake Vegetation Index (LVI) sampling.

Utricularia

Flowers
present

Flowers
purple (or
lavender or
pinkish;
occasional
individual
white)



Plants aquatic,
submersed branchlets
whorled around the
stem (usu. 4 whorls)
at intervals, giving it a
“puff-ball” appearance



***U.
purpurea***



Flowers
bright
yellow or
white

Plants with branchlets
attached in lake
sediment, and with
fine, grass-like
branchlets emerging,
or less commonly in
dense tangled mats



***U.
resupinata***

Flowers absent

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Proceed to page 2

Flowers white, tiny (~1mm), plants tiny, thread-like and easily overlooked (may look like filamentous algae) especially when not in flower



U. olivacea

***Utricularia*
with
flowers
bright
yellow or
white**

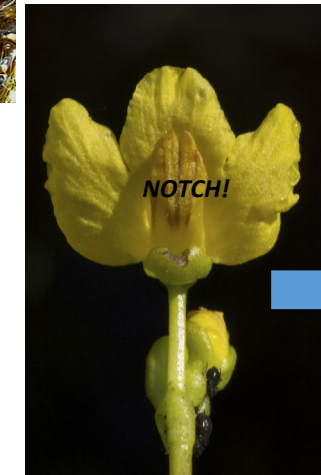
Flowers
bright
yellow,
much
bigger than
1mm

Flowering stalk has
a “wheel” of spongy
branchlets at the
base, which float
and hold up the
flowering stalk

The “spokes” of the
floating wheel taper in
width towards the
center; plant relatively
larger with flower stalk
to 15 cm; spur has notch
(seen from the back)



U. inflata



The “spokes” of the
floating wheel do not
taper toward the center.
Plant relatively smaller
with flower stalk <6 cm;
spur does not have notch
(seen from the back)



U. radiata



Flowering stalk
without a “wheel”
of floating
branchlets

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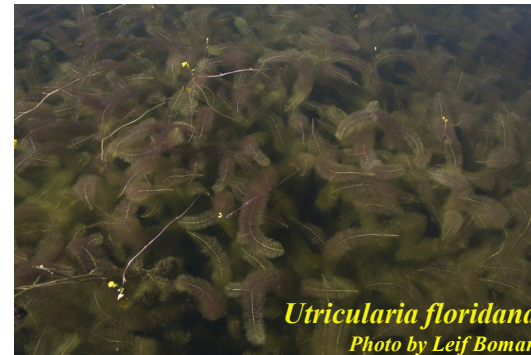
Main stem of plant thick and straplike; branches leafy and fern-like, triangular in outline; separate leafy and bladder branches; plant floating

Utricularia
flowers
bright
yellow,
without a
floating
wheel at the
base of
flowering
stalk, much
bigger than
1mm,
submersed
parts robust



U. foliosa

Main stem of plant robust and round; branches foxtail or feather boa-like; separate leafy and bladder branches; plant floats but stems are rooted; color green to purple



U. floridana

Plant not as above

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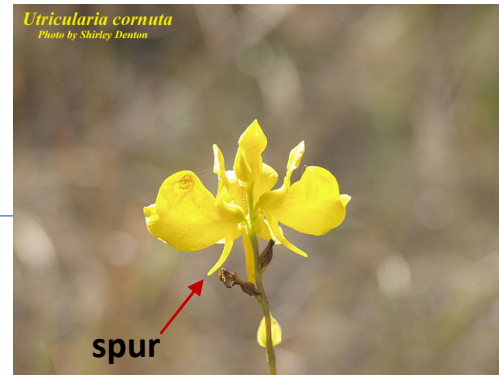
Plant aquatic and consisting of fine, threadlike strands, often in a tangled mat; can be on bottom or on other aquatic veg.; lateral branches also threadlike, can be forked 1-2 times; flowers when stranded at low water; flowers 1-3 on a flowering stalk; spur of flower shorter than or a little longer than the lower lip



U. gibba

Utricularia
flowers
bright
yellow,
without a
floating
wheel,
much bigger
than 1mm;
no large and
robust
submersed
branches

Plant with wetland habit, branchlets fine, rooted in substrate (can be found on floating islands); flowers usually 3-5 or more on a flowering stalk; spur conspicuous and much longer than lower lip

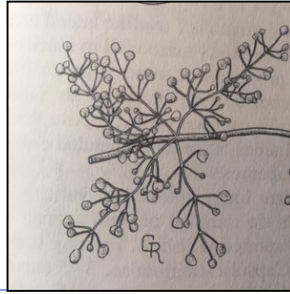


U. cornuta

note the *U. cornuta* is mixed with grass-like plants in this photo

***Utricularia*
aquatic, no
flowers or
fruits
present**

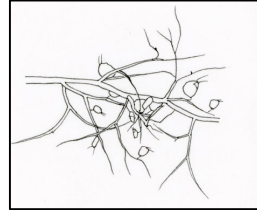
Submersed
portions delicate,
either thread-like
or with open
whorls



Submersed branchlets
whorled around the
stem at intervals (usu.
4 branches per whorl),
giving it a “puff-ball”
appearance; bladders
at ends of branchlets



U. purpurea

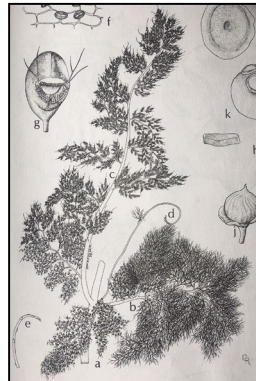


Submersed
branchlets
attached in lake
sediment, with
fine, grass-like
branchlets
emerging, or
rarely in dense
tangled mats



***U.
resupinata***

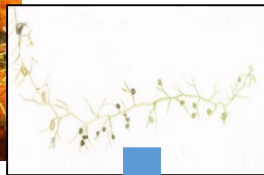
Submersed
portions robust
and densely
leafy or
feathery



Submersed
portions fine,
threadlike
strands, either
grass-like or in
tangled mats

Submersed
portions fine,
threadlike
strands, often in
dense tangled
mats; can be on
bottom or on
other aquatic
veg.;

Lateral
branches also
threadlike,
can fork 1-2
times;
common



U. gibba

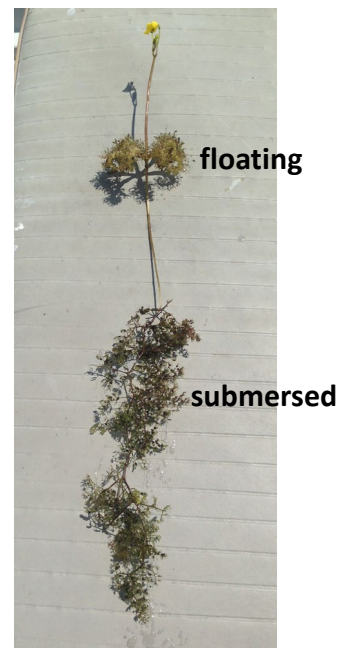
No lateral
branches;
resembles
filaments of
algae; bladders
attached
directly to
strands; rare



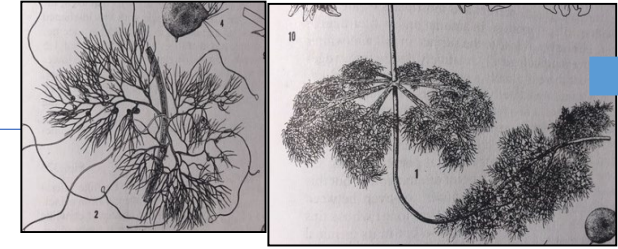
U. olivacea

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Submersed portions with highly dissected tree-like branching; no separate leafy and bladder branches (all one); variable in outline, but not fern-like/triangular or foxtail shaped; before flowering, develops a whorl of floating branches that supports the flowering stalk

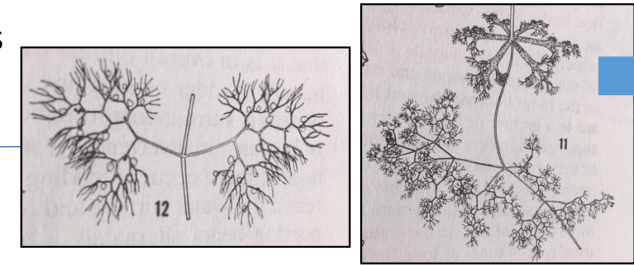


Lateral branches of submersed portions with unequal divisions



U. inflata

Lateral branches of submersed portions with equal divisions



U. radiata

Utricularia
aquatic, no flowers or fruits, submersed portions robust and densely leafy or feathery

Submersed portions leafy and fern-like, triangular in outline; main stem of plant thick, straplike; Leafy and bladder branches separate; plant floating



U. foliosa

Submersed portions foxtail or feather-boar like in outline. Main stem of plant round, robust. Leafy and bladder branches separate; plant floats but stems are rooted; color green to purple



U. floridana