

Water Violet

Regno: flora

Aquatic habitat



[hottoniapalustris.jpg](#) [1]

Water Violet - *Hottonia palustris*

This splendid water plant has a stem reaching up to 80 cm in height; its basal roots are buried in the underlying mud whilst other silvery, shiny roots dangle freely in the water.

The leaves are deeply divided as far as the central vein, like the teeth of a double comb and are completely submerged, but if there is a drastic fall in the water level they can surface. The leaves are alternate or connected to the stem in more or less regular whorls.

The floral scape, that emerges vertically for 20-40 cm from the water, is leafless and rough because of its hairs. The corolla of flowers, grouped in superimposed whorls, consists of 5 large white petals, up to 2 cm wide, tinged with pink and yellow in the middle.

H. palustris is the only totally aquatic Italian member of the Primulaceae. It lives in stagnant fresh waters of various size: the edges of fairly shallow lakes, ponds, silting river meanders and ditches.

Adapted to living in shady places, it also grows in flooded Alder woods and Sedge beds, especially when the tufts are spaced well apart, where it is often associated with Bladderworts.

In spite of its preference for waters poor in dissolved substances, it can tolerate slight eutrophication.

In Italy it is rare in the northern regions, extremely rare along the Tyrrhenian coast from Versilia to Lazio. Over the past few years it has been seen at Sibolla and also in the water of Fucecchio Marshes.

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Links:

[1] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/hottoniapalustris.jpg>