

# COMMON CATTAIL

## (*Typha Latifolia*)

**Oneida Lake Status:**  
**Common**

- Native to Oneida Lake
- Being overtaken by Purple Loosestrife
- An invasive in Australia and Hawaii

The common cattail is a species that is always found near or in the water (it is an obligate wetland species). On Oneida lake, this plant grows in shallow shoreline areas, and in marshes and other watershed areas where it is shallow. While the common cattail is a native plant in most of North America, including Oneida Lake, it is considered an invasive in areas like Australia and Hawaii.



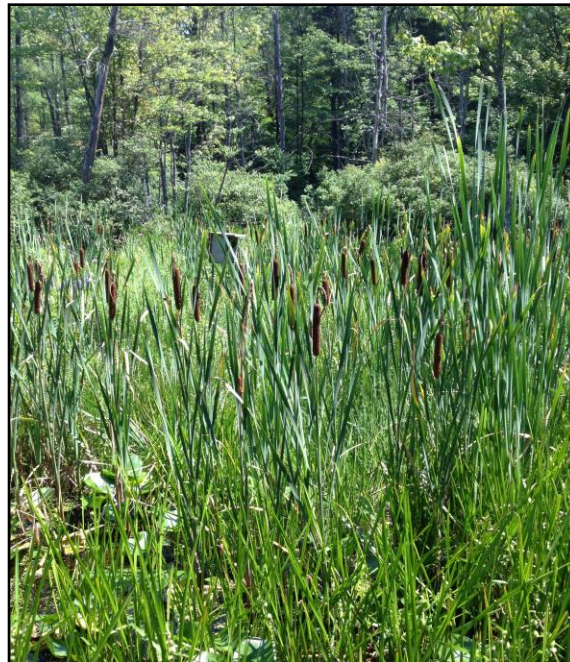
*Purple Loosestrife is taking over the Common Cattail - NYDEC*



*The Common cattail, exposing its mature flowers - USGS*

*Right: The Common cattail at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology - CBFS*

In the Oneida Lake ecosystem, the invasive plant, purple loosestrife, is actually pushing out the common cattail. In areas where purple loosestrife dominates, the common cattail is almost nonexistent. This eliminates important habitat for waterfowl and marsh animals on and around the lake. It can also negatively impact the development of smaller organisms like toad tadpoles.



The muskrat, the Canadian goose, and some types of snails all use the cattail as a food source, and many other organisms use it as shelter as well. The extirpation of this cattail species by purple loosestrife will displace many other species.

Prepared by:

**Samantha Roth and Marissa White**  
Cornell Biological Field Station

June 2013