

HIPPURIDACEAE MARE'S-TAIL FAMILY

Jon Ricketson
Missouri Botanical Garden
P. O. Box 299
St. Louis, MO 63166

Perennial herbs, emergent-aquatic or amphibious, of brackish and fresh water, generally glabrous. STEMS unbranched, the submerged stems lax, the emergent stems erect, arising from creeping rhizomes. LEAVES whorled in sets of (4-)6-12(-16), simple, estipulate; margins entire; submerged leaves slender, thin and flaccid, often soon degenerating; aerial leaves thicker and firmer, numerous and rather crowded, linear-attenuate. FLOWERS solitary in upper leaf axils, inconspicuous, sessile or the lower on short pedicels; perfect or rarely imperfect, occasionally polygamous; calyx reduced to an inconspicuous, 2-4-lobed or subentire rim around the top of the ovary; petals none; stamen 1, with a short, slender filament and a large 2-celled sagittate anther; pistil simple, the ovary inferior, unicarpellate; style terminal, elongate, slender, generally lying in the groove between the two anther sacs. FRUIT a small, smooth achene. --A monogeneric family, 1-3 spp., of temperate regions.

Hippuris L. Mare's-tail

Characters of the family. --(Greek: *hippos* = horse + *oura* = tail, for the growth form above water). McCully, M. E. & H. M. Dale. 1961. *Canad. J. Bot.* 39:611-625; 1099-1116.

Hippuris vulgaris L. (common). Mare's-tail. --AERIAL STEMS mostly 20-60 (-100) cm tall. LEAVES mostly 5-35 mm long, 1-3 mm wide. FLOWER with anthers 1 mm long, 0.5-1 mm wide, the filament about as long; style 1-2 mm long. FRUITS ellipsoid-obovoid, 1.7-2.5 mm long, 1 mm wide. $2n = 32$. --Rooted in mud of shallow, standing or slow-moving water, and in wet meadows: Apache co. (White, Chuska and Lukachukai Mts.); 2300-2850 m (7600-9400 ft); Jun-Jul (fr. Jul-Aug); widely distributed in the Northern Hemisphere, and in s S. Amer. Seeds and foliage often eaten by waterfowl.