


Lesser Water-plantain

Regno: flora

Riparian vegetation

 [baldelliaranuncol.jpg](#) [1]

Lesser Water-plantain - *Baldellia ranunculoides* (= *Alisma ranunculoides*)

This plant belongs to the Alismataceae Family, herbaceous marshland plants with leaves and stems provided with aeriferous tissue.

The leaves, all basal, are more or less widened like a ladle, which gives it its common Italian name of Mestolaccia (Mestola = ladle ndt).

Baldellia ranunculoides is characterised by its thick growth of roots like the hairs of a brush and by the great variability in the shape of its leaves and stems, depending on the ecological conditions in which it lives.

The submerged leaves, for example, are slender and ribbon-shaped; the emerged leaves on the other hand have a long stalk and a shorter, lanceolate blade.

Stems of the plant growing in the mud can sometimes change into stolons capable of rooting at the nodes.

The small flowers, with three pinkish petals, are gathered in umbrella shaped inflorescences, carried on whorls around upright scapes up to 50 cm tall.

The fruits, similar to those of buttercups, float, so guaranteeing their dissemination by means of water.

Distribution of the species in Italy is discontinuous in the peninsular regions and it has probably disappeared from the Po Valley

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