



### Wetlands have weeds too

Wetlands around Australia are under threat from infestations of water weeds.

Some of the worst water weeds in Australia are cabomba, salvinia, hymenachne and alligator weed. These four weeds are part of the 20 Weeds of National Significance (WoNS). Other major water weeds found in Australia include water hyacinth and water lettuce.

One of the biggest threats that water weeds pose is their ability to grow and expand quickly. Salvinia infestations can double their size in two to three days.

### Problems caused by waterweeds

Water weeds impact heavily on our water quality, economy, environment and recreational activities. Water weeds:

- are dangerous to swimmers and boats entangling them
- reduce oxygen levels in the water, making it unsuitable for many fish species
- prevent native birds and wildlife from using wetlands
- replace native water plants
- destroy the visual beauty of the environment
- increase mosquito populations
- entangle and drown livestock
- increase the cost and level required for potable water treatments

### How do they spread?

- Seeds and plant parts wash down drains into waterways where they grow and spread
- People dump unwanted aquarium plants to creeks, rivers and wetlands
- Birds transport weeds on their feet from wetland to wetland
- Some commercial aquarium owners use wetlands as their own personal farms – introducing plants into wetlands, and then harvesting them once they have grown and spread.

### What can you do?

- Learn to identify the major waterweeds in your area. Contact your local or state government department weeds officer for more information.
- Never buy or keep water weeds in your ponds and aquariums. Why keep a weed that destroys our waterways when there are many native or non-weedy alternatives that you can use and enjoy?
- Check and remove plant materials from boats, propellers and trailers before entering and leaving waterways.
- Don't collect or dump aquarium plants near waterways. Even though most unwanted water plants can be killed by sealing them in a black plastic bag and "baking" it in the sun for a couple of weeks, some may re-hydrate and grow if placed in moist areas
- Control water weeds that are within your property boundaries.
- Stop water that contains fertilisers and nutrients from running into waterways.
- Get involved in Weedbusters organising or attending a local event.

### More information

- Visit [www.weedbusters.info](http://www.weedbusters.info) or [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)
- Contact your local government weeds officer or state government environment or primary industries department
- Contact the Aquatic WoNS coordinator for a water weeds poster at [andrew.petroeshevsky@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:andrew.petroeshevsky@dpi.nsw.gov.au)