

# WATER HYACINTH

*Eichhornia crassipes*

Pontederiaceae, the pickerel-weed family

Category: EDRR

## FACTSHEET INFORMATION

### Summary of Invasiveness

- Water hyacinth is a free-floating, freshwater plant that has the ability to form large, dense mats within waterbodies.
- It can damage ecosystem services, reduce habitat and biodiversity, and negatively impact agriculture, tourism, and recreational opportunities.

### Description

- Free-floating freshwater perennial.
- Leaves are emergent, ovate, and 4-8 inches in diameter.
- Leaf stalks are bulbous and spongy.
- Flowers are purple with 6 petals, one with a yellow diamond-shaped patch outlined with a deeper purple.
- Flowers emerge from single spike containing 8-15 flowers.
- Roots are dark and feathery, growing up to 3 ft. long.
- Egg-shaped seeds are ribbed and contained in a membranous capsule.

### Introduction and Movement

- Water hyacinth is native to South America and was first introduced as an ornamental, eventually escaping into natural water systems.
- It can double its size every 4-10 days by producing stolons that are capable of generating daughter plants.
- It prefers slow-moving water and can inhabit canals, ponds, lakes, and reservoirs. Plant materials are easily transported in water currents and can also catch a ride on animals or recreational equipment.

### Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Water hyacinth and report any sightings.
- Always research water garden plants before purchasing.
- Never release aquarium contents or water garden species into surface waters and dispose of unwanted vegetation by burning, composting, or drying out completely.
- When boating, make sure to clean off any vegetative materials when leaving each waterbody and before launching into another.
- Always Remember To: **KNOW WHAT YOU GROW**

**DON'T LET IT LOOSE & CLEAN > DRAIN > DRY**

#### Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/20544>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: [INVASIVESPECIES.IDAHO.GOV](http://INVASIVESPECIES.IDAHO.GOV)  
TO REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES IN IDAHO, PLEASE CALL 1-877-336-8676.

# WATER HYACINTH DISTRIBUTION MAP



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