



DECLARED PLANT

PARROT FEATHER

Myriophyllum aquaticum

Parrot feather is a submerged, aquatic perennial growing from rhizomes in shallow fresh water.

Parrot feather is declared under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004. Its sale is prohibited, and control may be enforced in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, and SA Murray Darling Basin NRM regions.

Other common names: Brazilian water milfoil, diamond milfoil, thread of life, water feather.

Family: *Haloragacae*.

Synonyms: *Enhydrya aquatica*, *Myriophyllum brasiliense*, *Myriophyllum proserpinacoides*.

Origin: Native to South America. Introduced as an ornamental pond and aquarium plant.

DESCRIPTION

Habit: Perennial with erect stems growing underwater from a horizontal rhizome, later emerging up to 30 cm above water level.

Leaves: Narrow ovate, 2-4 cm long, deeply divided into fine segments like feathers, pale grey-green, in whorls of 4-6 evenly spaced along the stems.

Flowers: May be found in leaf axils near the end of emergent shoots, white or pale pink, about 3 mm long, all female and lacking stamens. Flowering time: late spring or summer.

Fruit and Seeds: Not produced.

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

Parrot feather establishes in the wild from dumped aquarium waste. It competes with native aquatic plants for habitat. Its stems may float out over the surface to form dense tangled rafts of plant material, from which the emergent shoots give rise to an impenetrable weed mass. Large infestations interfere with the flow of water in streams, freshwater fishing and other recreation.

It can be mistaken for the many native *Myriophyllum* species, and may not be recognised until large infestations have developed.



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Myriophyllum aquaticum

HOW IT SPREADS

Parrot feather spreads only by vegetative growth as it does not form seeds in Australia. Small fragments of rhizome easily establish in mud to form new colonies. Stem fragments can develop roots and are moved by stream flow, carried on boats or dumped in aquarium waste.

HABITAT

Parrot feather invades shallow waters on muddy substrates. It grows best in warm, shallow water and eutrophic conditions, and tolerates slightly saline waters to 3.3 ppt salinity.

DISTRIBUTION

Parrot feather is common in garden ponds and aquaria; it has been previously found growing wild in the Murray River near Murray Bridge, and in all other States.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Dispose of aquarium waste appropriately, thoroughly desiccating and bagging all plant material.

Seek control advice if you have this weed on your property.

Weed control information is available at: pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds_and_pest_animals/weeds_in_sa



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your local Natural Resources Centre for information on controlling declared weeds:

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au

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