



INVASIVE WEEDS



Cabomba or Fanwort (Cabomba caroliniana)

Introduced from South America for use as an aquarium plant this submerged weed roots to the sediment. Cabomba plants break easily and can regenerate from the remaining roots or free-floating parts, allowing it to establish further downstream. Dense underwater thickets form which chokes the natural waterways. Mechanical or biological (weevils) removal of plants are the most common technique adopted, with extreme caution to remove all components of the plant to prevent reinfestation.

Water Lettuce (Pistia stratiotes)

This is a free-floating perennial plant that looks like a miniature lettuce. It is native to the Northern Territory, but is an exotic weed introduced to Queensland and is a restricted invasive plant in Queensland. Under tropical conditions growth is rapid, resulting in large thick mats on the water surface. Mechanical removal of plants (using an excavator or other machinery) is the most ecologically sound method as it removes the nutrients out of the system and avoids water quality degradation by masses of rotting weeds.





Water Hyacinth (Eichhornia crassipes)

Introduced from South America as an ornamental aquatic plant this floating waterweed can grow to 65cm tall, with an extensive root system up to 1m in length. Infestations can double in size within just a few weeks, with these large floating biomasses altering the natural waterway and imposing threats to infrastructure. Mechanical removal of plants is the most common technique adopted, which is then controlled using localised herbicide spray.







Salvinia (Salvinia molesta)

This free-floating aquatic fern forms thick mats that can quickly cover waterways, with infestations doubling in size with the right temperature and nutrients. The dense mats prevent sunlight from entering the waterway, killing all vegetation below this surface, resulting in oxygen depletion from the water as the organic matter rots and sinks to the sediment. Young leaves are often mistaken for the native Duckweed (Lemna aequinoctialis). Mechanical, biological (weevils) or localised herbicide application methods have all proved to be effective technique adopted for the control of this weed.

Singapore Daisy (Sphagneticola trilobata)

Introduced from South America, this low climbing weed forms vigorous mats of ground cover, outcompeting most other plants within its path. Mainly spread by cuttings from slashing and pruning, therefore it is important to dispose of waste carefully as the smallest cutting can regenerate. Mechanical removal of the runners (either by hand pulling or digging up) is the most effective technique adopted, however herbicide control methods may also be used.





Hymenachne (Hymenachne amplexicaulis)

This robust, rhizomatous, perennial grass has become an unwanted pest of numerous waterways including streambanks and shallow wetlands. This weed causes extensive damage to the waterway by reducing natural flow capacity and drainage. Seed dispersal occurs through water movement or migratory aquatic birds, however, the plant can also regenerate from very small pieces. Mechanical removal of the weed is the only current control method, with extreme care taken to ensure all waste is removed from the site to prevent further infestations.