



# Biosecurity alert: Water hyacinth

*(Eichhornia crassipes)*

## The pest and its impacts

Water hyacinth is widely regarded as the world's worst aquatic weed due to its ability to form dense and impenetrable floating mats on the water's surface.

The mats cause considerable biodiversity impacts by displacing native vegetation, decreasing light penetration and preventing birds and other fauna from accessing the water.

Mats also increase the quantity of decaying vegetation and prevent oxygen exchange in the water, resulting in unsuitable habitat for fish and other aquatic fauna.

### Water hyacinth characteristics:

- a free-floating plant with spongy leaf petioles
- leaves are glossy, waxy and dark green
- flowers are blue to purple on a large spike
- roots are fibrous and feather-like.

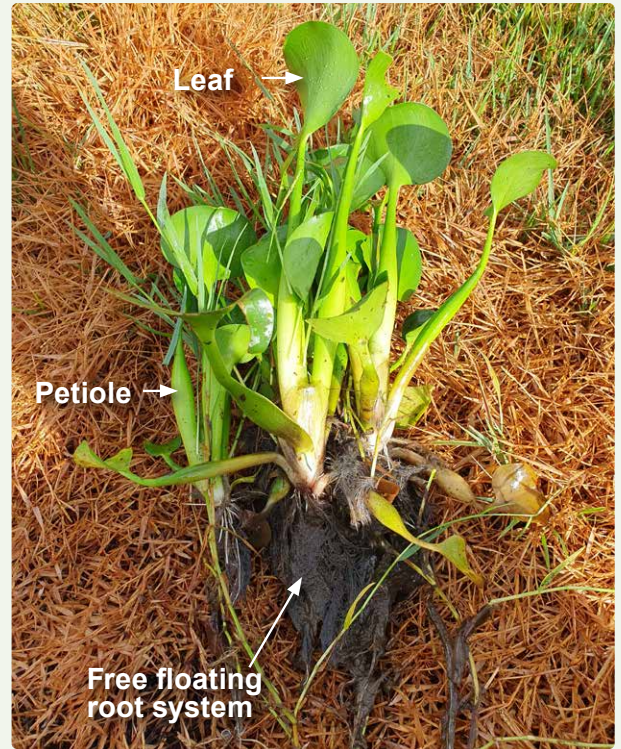


## LOOK for these pests

- Free-floating perennial plant that can grow to a height of 3 feet.
- Circular/elliptical green leaf blades attached to a spongy, inflated petiole.
- Leaves are fanlike and slightly cupped which allows the plants to spread easily over water bodies when the wind blows.

### Key points

- Can cause algal bloom and reduce biological diversity.
- Impacts underwater life such as fish and other plants.
- Can impede the passage of large & small vessels.
- Toxic if ingested by some animals.



Water Hyacinth



Infestation treatment in Western Australia



## REPORT suspected sightings

- Be aware of any new or unusual plants
- Prompt action is necessary to assist in eradication
- Note the date, time and location of the pest
- Take photographs, if possible



### Report your observations

MyPestGuide® Reporter  
via app or online  
[mypestguide.dpird.wa.gov.au](http://mypestguide.dpird.wa.gov.au)

Pest and Disease Information Service  
08 9368 3080  
[padis@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:padis@dpird.wa.gov.au)

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