



# PARROT FEATHER

## *Myriophyllum aquaticum*

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

**It is proposed for declaration under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*, with prohibition on sale and movement throughout South Australia and enforced control in the South East NRM region.**

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

**Family:** *Haloragacae*.

**Synonyms:** *Enhydra 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 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 arise to give an impenetrable weed mass. Large infestations interfere with the flow of water in streams, recreational freshwater fishing and the use of rivers for 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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## 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?

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



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

[www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au)

**Further weed control information is also available at:**

[www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa)

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