

# Invasive Aquatic Plants

## What every water gardener and shoreline restorer should know

Invasive species are plants and animals that are not native to an area, which are capable of causing harm. While most non-native plant species are not a problem, a few, such as purple loosestrife, flowering rush, and Eurasian water-milfoil, harm ecosystems and impede water recreation. Purple loosestrife, once sold and used because of its beautiful flowers, has invaded thousands of Minnesota wetlands, displacing native plants and reducing food and habitat for native species. Other non-native plants, such as yellow iris and pink water lilies, have spread in a few Minnesota waters and appear to have invasive characteristics. Once introduced, invasive species can spread to new areas and can rarely be eliminated. Once established, the costs to reduce their harmful impacts can be considerable.

### How to avoid Invasive Species:

#### ✓ Don't use illegal species

Minnesota *Prohibited Invasive Species* are likely to cause problems and should be avoided. *Prohibited Invasive Species* may not be legally sold, purchased, or possessed in Minnesota (see list on back).

#### ✓ Use all other non-native species cautiously

Most aquatic plants available for sale are non-native. These non-native aquatic plants can be possessed, but must be kept out of public waters, which include most lakes, wetlands, and streams (see diagram and list on back).

**For the phone number of your DNR Area or Regional Fisheries Office contact the DNR Info Center at 651-296-6157 (toll free 1-888-646-6367)**



Hydrilla is one example of a very invasive plant found "hitchhiking" on rootstocks of ornamental aquatic plants.

Photo: courtesy of Alison Fox

#### ✓ Plant clean material

Wash off loose pieces of vegetation and debris in a bucket of tap water before planting. In some cases, a fragment of an invasive species will cling to the rootstock of another desirable plant. Make sure you don't plant any "hitchhikers."

#### ✓ Use native plants

Native plants are adapted to an area and to each other. Ask your local plant seller or contact the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to find out the best native plants to use in your area.

#### ✓ If you want to plant in a natural water body, contact your local DNR office

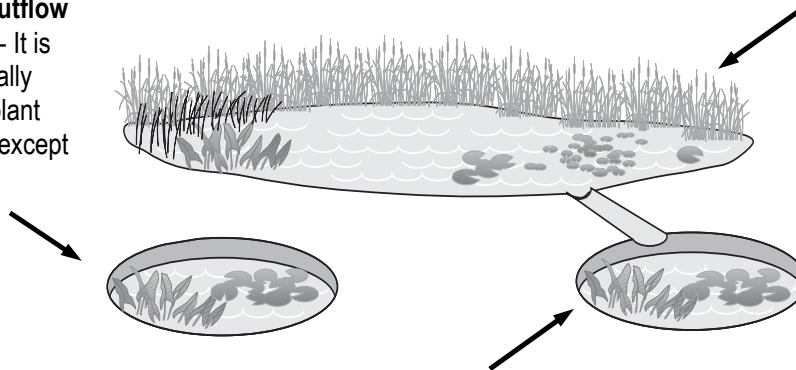
Native species may be planted in natural waters, **but a permit is needed to plant below the ordinary high water line in "public" waters (see diagram on back)**. If you wish to plant in a natural water, please contact your DNR Area or Regional Fisheries Office or the DNR Info Center (toll-free 1-888-646-6367) to find out if the water body is public, to find out if your plants are natives, and to obtain a per-

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# Where you can use aquatic plants

Created ponds or water gardens, with no outflow to "public" waters - It is **OK** to place any legally purchased aquatic plant species (any plants except illegal species).



"Public" waters are most natural waters - A permit is required for planting native aquatic plants below the ordinary high water line. It is **illegal** to place any non-native species in these waters below the ordinary high water line.

Created ponds or non-public natural waters connected to "public" waters - Native aquatic plants may be planted without a permit from the DNR. It is **illegal** to place any non-native species in these waters.

## Illegal Invasive Aquatic Plants \*

Minnesota *Prohibited Invasive Species* may not be sold, purchased or possessed in Minnesota. Nevertheless, some of these species are available for sale through catalog and Internet sales. The following is a short list of some of these species known to be sold for water gardening.

- Ambulia** (*Limnophila sessiliflora*)
- Flowering rush** (*Butomus umbellatus*)
- European frogbit** (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*)
- Indian swampweed** (*Hygrophila polysperma*)
- Purple loosestrife** (*Lythrum salicaria*, *Lythrum virgatum* and all cultivars)
- Watermoss, Giant salvinia, caterpillars** (*Salvinia molesta*, *Salvinia auriculata*)
- Water Velvet** (*Azolla pinnata*)

If you see any Minnesota *Prohibited Invasive Species* for sale in Minnesota, please report it to the DNR.

\* The full list of Minnesota *Prohibited Invasives* can be found on the DNR Web site:  
[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological\\_services/invasives/laws.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological_services/invasives/laws.html)

For more information contact, Wendy Crowell at 651-259-5085 or toll free 1-888-646-6367  
[www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)

## Regulated Invasive Aquatic Plants

In Minnesota, all non-native aquatic plants available for sale are regulated in some way. Even non-native species that are legal to buy and possess may not be placed in public waters, nor in ponds connected to public waters (see diagram above). The following are examples of some commonly sold non-native species.

- Banded nardoo, water clover** (*Marsilea mutica*)
- Fanwort** (*Cabomba Caroliniana*)
- Hybrid hardy water lilies** (*Nymphaea* sp.)  
note: native water lilies are *Nymphaea odorata* subs. *odorata* and *N. odorata* subs. *tuberosa*
- Papyrus** (*Cyperus papyrus*)
- Parrot feather** (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
- Water hyacinth** (*Eichhornia crassipes*)
- Water lettuce** (*Pistia stratiotes*)
- Water poppy** (*Hydrocleys nymphoides*)
- Yellow iris** (*Iris pseudacorus*)
- Yellow floating heart** (*Nymphoides peltata*)

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