



Biosecurity alert: Salvinia

Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*)

The pest and its impacts

Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is a free-floating perennial aquatic fern, made up of pairs of oval, green-to-brown leaves connected by a horizontal stem.

It grows quickly to form thick mats that cover lakes, slow-moving rivers and other waterways. These mats trap litter and stagnate water, harming aquatic wildlife and form a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Salvinia also obstructs access to water for animals and people.

Salvinia characteristics

- forms dense mats over the water surface, severely modifying aquatic habitat, shading out and creating unfavourable conditions for all aquatic organisms of flora and fauna
- excludes light, reducing oxygen levels, leading to water stagnation and pollution
- decaying plant material can produce foul odours
- salvinia mats can be mistaken for solid ground by people and animals with reports of animals falling into water.



Salvinia in waterway



LOOK for this pest

- Free-floating plant, often found in ornamental ponds and advertised for sale online or at weekend markets.
- leaves – oval, green-to-brown, topped with tiny distinctive ‘egg-beater like’ hair structures
- frond – submerged in water, slender and root-like (up to 30 cm), covered with fine brown hairs
- no flowers.



Key points:

- Salvinia is a threat to freshwater ecosystems
- If present in pond or aquarium, remove from water, double bag and place in general waste or solarise with black plastic before using as mulch.



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

Pest and Disease Information Service
08 9368 3080
padis@dpird.wa.gov.au

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