

# Water Hyacinth

## What is it?

Water Hyacinth is an introduced aquatic plant that infests slow moving waterways lagoons and farm dams.

Plants can form large floating mats that will completely cover the surface of the water. This results in increased siltation, as the plant's foliage traps dust and dirt. Infestations also block sunlight from the water which can lead to loss of oxygen.

Propagation is by both seeds and vegetatively. Water Hyacinth produces numerous seeds, which will sink to the bottom and germinate when conditions are favourable, it is estimated that seeds can lay dormant for up to 15 years before germinating

## What does it look like?

It is a stoloniferous plant with spongy inflated leaves that provide buoyancy. Roots can be up to a metre long and are black to purplish in colour. Flowers are formed in clusters and are lavender/blue with yellow centres.

## Control Measures

**Physical control:**  
Water hyacinth can be controlled by hand or mechanical removal. This can be an extremely arduous task, as one hectare of Water Hyacinth may yield up to 2 000 000 plants and weigh up to 400 tonnes. Plants should be placed well away from the water edge and allowed to dry out. For large areas there are mechanical harvesters available.

### Water Hyacinth

*Eichhornia crassipes*

A category W2 weed in Great Lakes and Gloucester, and a W3 in all other council districts. The weed must be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed.



### Herbicide control:

There are herbicides registered for the control. However, if the affected area is used for stock watering or irrigation, alternate water sources will be required.

The results from using herbicides can be very effective in a short time. Instead of treating the entire area at one time, it is recommended to do sections at a time.

The use of herbicides on or near water is also covered under various acts that are administered by the Environment Protection Authority. You should contact the nearest regional office and request information on the requirements before proceeding with herbicide applications.

### Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (January 2004). Users are reminded of the need to ensure that any product purchased for the control of Water Hyacinth is registered for that purpose. The author cannot take responsibility for any changes, or modifications, that are made to product registration or requirements that may occur after January 2004.

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Produced by the Lower Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy (LHCCREMS).

Design by Carlena Payne (carlenadesigns@hotmail.com).