

# What to do if you find South American waterweed...

- Do not collect, purchase or use this plant for water gardens or aquariums. Properly dispose of plants to prevent them from escaping and spreading to the wild.
- Small isolated infestations may be controlled by repeated hand removal over successive years, all fragments must be collected and disposed of. It is not practical to attempt digging large infestations.
- Prevent spread by thoroughly cleaning boats, trailers, fishing gear, and other recreational equipment.

## Help slow the spread of South American waterweed in Oregon!

**Report suspect  
sites to**

Oregon Department of Agriculture  
Noxious Weed Control Program  
503-986-4621 or call

**1-866-INVADER**



**Oregon Department  
of Agriculture**  
Plant Division  
Noxious Weed Control Program  
635 Capitol St. NE  
Salem OR 97301-2332



**South American  
waterweed  
*Egeria densa*  
Aquatic invader!**



## What is South American waterweed?

South American waterweed is a submersed, freshwater perennial that roots on the bottom of still and flowing water bodies. It can grow up to 20 feet deep. Introduced over 50 years ago as an aquarium plant, it has escaped to become naturalized in many parts of the US, including many waterways in western Oregon.



## What does South American waterweed do?

South American waterweed forms dense monospecific stands that restrict water movement, trap sediment, and cause fluctuations in water quality. These dense mats interfere with recreational uses, displace native plant species, and negatively impact wildlife.



## How does South American waterweed spread?

In the US, all *Egeria densa* plants are male and no viable seed is produced. Stem fragments are the source of spread rooting to form new plants. Fragments can drift to new areas or move from one waterbody to another by boats, trailers, recreational gear and waterfowl. Plants have been introduced by aquarium dumping.



- Widely distributed
- Limited distribution
- Historical site
- Not known to occur



## How can you identify South American waterweed?

Leaves are strap-shaped, about 1 inch long and ¼ inch wide with very small serrations along the leaf edges. Leaves occur in whorls of four to eight around the stem. Plants are often leafy, the leaves and stems are bright green. Flowers are held 1 inch above the water and have three white petals. This plant could be mistaken for the common native species American waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*), which has smaller leaves (less than ½ inch long) and three leaves per whorl. It can also be confused with the highly invasive hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), which typically has five leaves per whorl and more prominent leaf serrations.

<http://oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT>  
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