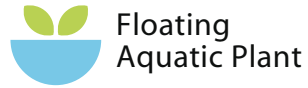


Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)



Floats on still and slow-moving streams



Densely crowded rosette of leaves

Water lettuce is a perennial freshwater aquatic plant that floats on the surface of still water and slow-moving streams. It is only likely to establish in northern parts of the North Island.

The plant looks a little bit like a thick-leaved, floating lettuce. The short stem supports a densely crowded rosette of pale, bright green leaves that are densely hairy. The lower leaves of this rosette lie flat on the surface or cluster vertically. The plant lacks conspicuous flowers.

Water lettuce spreads rapidly from runners, dislodged plants and by seed carried in water.

Water lettuce is an aggressive and invasive weed that potentially could cause serious damage to New Zealand's waterways. It is thought to have been eradicated from this country. Any sightings should be reported immediately to your Regional Council.