



Lagarosiphon

Lagarosiphon major

DECLARED CLASS 1



Description

Lagarosiphon is a perennial aquatic weed that forms large submerged interwoven mats throughout the summer. Lagarosiphon has branched stems which are brittle and grow up to 5 metres in length. Leaves are stiff, bent backwards and alternatively arranged

in a characteristic spiral form, which are more closely spaced at the top than at the bottom of the stem. Small purple flowers are found in the joints of the upper leaves. Fruits and seeds have not been found in Australia.

The problem

Lagarosiphon could be acquired as an aquarium plant and is potentially a serious pest of our natural waterways (if it reaches the natural environment). It is an aggressive freshwater weed that is easily displaced by water movement. The long stems of Lagarosiphon have the potential to cause problems by blocking inlets to water pumping equipment and by affecting propellers and cooling systems of recreation equipment. Our native fish and waterbirds may be affected where the growth becomes dense and restrictive.

Prevention

The main threat is by release from aquarium situations into dams and creeks. Prevention is cheaper than cure and responsibility lies with hobbyists, aquatic plant nurseries and pet shop suppliers not to introduce this plant into Queensland.

Lagarosiphon is spread by water movement which causes the stems to break at the node, float downstream, fall to the bottom and produce roots and new weed infestations.

Lagarosiphon is often confused with other water weeds, such as *Elodea crista* and *Hydrilla*. However, the leaves of *Elodea* and *Hydrilla* are arranged in whorls around the stems, whereas the leaves of Lagarosiphon occur singly on the stem in a spiral arrangement.

Currently, there are no existing infestations of Lagarosiphon in Australia.

If you find Lagarosiphon, or a plant you think is Lagarosiphon, please contact your local Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Land Protection Officer.

Control

The best form of weed control is prevention. Always treat weed infestations when small, do not allow weeds to establish. Weed control is not always cheap but it is cheaper now than next year, or the year after. Proper planning ensures you get value for each dollar spent.

Look at your weed problem carefully. Can you realistically eradicate it? Or should you contain the weed to stop new infestations developing while you reduce existing ones? What are you required to do by legislation? How does weed control fit into your property management plan? What can you do to restore areas and prevent re-establishment?

The best approach is usually to combine different methods. Control may include; chemical, mechanical, fire and biological methods; combined with land management changes. The control methods you

choose must suit the specific weed and your particular situation.

Manual

When physical removal is chosen care should be taken to remove underground stems and broken plant pieces to prevent regrowth.

Lagarosiphon is a truly aquatic plant and should be left in the sun out of water for a few days to dry out prior to disposal. Please do not throw any material directly into waterways, dams, creeks, drains or rivers.

Life cycle/spread

Two types of flowers exist; the male flowers break from the plant and float towards the female flowers which remain attached to the stem by a long, thin filament-like tube. Although regeneration by seed has not been seen in Australia, new plants are formed in cooler months from small broken pieces of stem.

Lagarosiphon can also produce new plants using underground stems (rhizomes) which are found at points along the stem.

Habitat

Overseas information suggests that Lagarosiphon needs good light for maximum growth. It has been recorded to live in clear water up to 7 m below the water surface. Lagarosiphon prefers cool conditions and grows well on silty or sandy beds with low nutrient levels.

Declaration details

Lagarosiphon is a declared Class 1 plant under *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route) Management Act 2002*. Declaration requires landholders to control declared pests on the land and waters under their control. A Local Government may serve a notice upon a landholder requiring control of declared pests.

Origin and distribution

Lagarosiphon originates from southern Africa but has become naturalised in countries such as New Zealand and some northern European nations (France, Italy, England). It has not been found to be naturalised in Australia.

Further information

Further information is available from the vegetation management/weed control/environmental staff at your local government.

Fact sheets are available from DPI&F service centres and the DPI&F Information Centre phone (13 25 23). Check our web site <www.dpi.qld.gov.au> to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this Pest Fact should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the utilisation of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

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