

Hydrocleys nymphoides

COMMON NAME

water poppy

FAMILY

Limnocharitaceae

AUTHORITY

Hydrocleys nymphoides (Humb. et Bonpl.) Buchenau

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Stoloniferous perennial with tufts of thick glossy, floating leaves attached to rubbery creeping stems and a distinctive showy yellow flowers with a purple centre.

DISTRIBUTION

Locally naturalised in northern North Island south to the Rotorua lakes, eradicated from most known sites.

HABITAT

Still and flowing water bodies, including ponds, streams and lake margins to ca 2m water depth.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Underwater stem is elastic, creeping, or floating near the water surface. Leaves and roots attached at each node along the stem. Leaves are bright glossy green, oval, 7 cm long, and have an inflated main vein on the underside. The leaf sinus is shallow. Flowers consist of 3 yellow petals with a purple centre (filaments) and are up to 8 cm across.

SIMILAR TAXA

Yellow water lily (*Nuphar lutea*), marshwort (*Nymphoides geminata*), and fringed water lily (*Nymphoides peltata*). Yellow water lily has very thick spongy stolons (up to 10 cm) and much larger floating leaves (up to 40 cm long and 30 cm wide). Marshwort and fringed water lily do not have an inflated mid-vein on the underside of the leaves. They also have wings on the outer edges of their petals.

FLOWERING

Late summer

FLOWER COLOURS

Purple, Yellow

FRUITING

No seed production known in NZ



Hydrocleys nymphoides. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.

LIFE CYCLE

Vegetative spread by stolon fragments, deliberate planting.

Water poppy produces new plantlets at the end of the growth season. These break away from the main plant and rise to the surface, where they are carried away by water movement to a new location before taking root in the mud (Ermert & Clapp 1998)

YEAR NATURALISED

1914

ORIGIN

Tropical South America.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond plant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify regional council if found

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

Coffey BT, Clayton JS (1988). New Zealand water plants: a guide to plants found in New Zealand freshwaters. Ruakura Agricultural Centre. 65pp.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Kasselmann C (2003). Aquarium plants. Krieger Publishing company, Florida, 518pp.;

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hydrocleys-nymphoides/>