

Lemna aequinoctialis

COMMON NAME

tropical duckweed

FAMILY

Araceae

AUTHORITY

Lemna aequinoctialis Welw.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser | Qualifiers: SO

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Tiny, surface floating aquatic plant with bright green plate-like leaves (3 x 2 mm) that have a pale underside and one root per leaf.

DISTRIBUTION

Only collected once from Auckland Zoo.

HABITAT

Clear, still fertile water including, troughs, dams, drains and backwaters.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Platelets usually with bright green upper sides, paler undersides and one root per platelet. A characteristic of this species is the single root that arises from a winged sheath.

SIMILAR TAXA

The native *Lemna disperma* is very similar but the root does not arise from a winged sheath. *Landoltia* has two or more roots arising from each platelet. Watermeal (*Wolffia australiana*) is much smaller and lacking roots. *Azolla* is an aquatic fern and has scale like leaves that overlap.

FLOWERING

Unknown

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

FRUITING

Unknown

LIFE CYCLE

These tiny plants are readily spread by waterfowl.

YEAR NATURALISED

2010

ORIGIN

Throughout the warmer parts of the world, including northern Australia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Probably a contaminant of imported plants or animals.



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CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Difficult to control once established.

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Crawford DJ, Landolt E, Les DH, Kimball RT. 2001. Allozyme studies in Lemnaceae. *Taxon* 50(4): 987–999.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1224716>.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lemna-aequinoctialis/>