

## PLANT PEST CONTROL

### AQUATIC PLANT PESTS

#### Hydrilla verticillata

##### *Why are we worried?*

Hydrilla is a submerged plant which forms dense canopies across the water surface and to depths of four metres. It is only present in Hawke's Bay and could spread to lakes, rivers and drains throughout New Zealand. Hydrilla is very difficult to control.

##### *What does it look like?*

- Hydrilla has very thin (2 mm diam.) stems, with leaves in whorls of three to eight, but usually four to five. The leaves are from 10 to 20 mm long and have toothed edges.
- Hydrilla grows under the water surface, and roots on the bottom of lakes, rivers and drains. It can grow from the water's edge to depths of 6.5 metres.
- Hydrilla can form very dense and branched communities from the water surface to depths of four metres. These exclude any other aquatic plants. At the water surface it forms extremely dense canopies.
- Hydrilla spreads by rhizomes (underground stems), stolons (runners) and stem fragments. It also forms underground tubers and shoots on the stem. These shoots form in winter and break off the plant, sinking to the bottom, where with the tubers and underground stems, they sprout in spring and summer.

##### *Where is it found?*

In New Zealand Hydrilla occurs only in Hawke's Bay. It is found in Lakes Tutira, Opouahi and Eland.

##### *What's the best way to control the plant?*

Torpedo herbicide has been used without success. Grass carp were introduced into Lake Eland as a trial in 1988 to control Hydrilla. While total eradication is difficult due to tubers and shoots of the plant, the carp are reported to be controlling it. Surveys are continuing on this trial.

Contact the Hawke's Bay Regional Council for more information on control.



**For further information**

If you think you may have this plant pest on your property, please contact the Biosecurity Plants Officers at Hawke's Bay Regional Council for advice and we will work with you to eradicate it.

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