

Invasive Species Alert

Water Hyacinth

(*Eichhornia crassipes*)

Detected in Michigan

Identification:

- Erect, free-floating perennial herb
- Short, bulbous leaf petioles
- Distinctive air bladders that keep leaves afloat
- Rounded, leathery leaves arranged in whorls of 6-10
- 14-day flowering cycle produced lavender flowers with central yellow fleck



Wilfredo Robles, Mississippi State University,
Bugwood.org

Habitat: Mainly a tropical and sub-tropical weed growing in freshwater systems. Water hyacinth is not tolerant to temperatures below freezing for long periods of time, nor is it tolerant of high salinity water.



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

Native Range: Amazon basin

U.S. Distribution: Water hyacinth has been introduced to at least 25 states and is widespread in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, and Tennessee.

Local Concern: This invasive species forms dense colonies in water bodies that block sunlight and crowd out native species. At optimum temperatures, it can double its biomass within a

month. Dense colonization can also impede boat traffic, reduce water flow, and interfere with hydroelectric power generation.

Means of Introduction/Spread: Boat traffic, flooding, water flow, human transport, aquaculture release

This species is currently allowable for sale and possession in Michigan. If these plants are observed outside of cultivation, please report to:

www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies

Report online at www.misin.msu.edu or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone