

Azolla pinnata

Feathered Mosquito fern

Azollaceae, the mosquito fern family

Category: **EDRR**



Diagnostic Characteristics

- Free-floating aquatic annual; small fern measuring 0.6-1 inch across
- Leaves are 0.04-0.08 inch long, rounded, occur in overlapping pairs, and reddish on lower lobes fading to green at the tips
- Leaves are coated with fine, water-repellent hairs that enable the plant to float
- Fruiting structures on underside of plant contain up to 64 spores

Background

- Native to parts of Africa and Asia; possible introduction as an ornamental in water gardens
- Inhabits stagnant areas in rivers, ponds, and ditches
- Reproduces by spores; can survive in moist soils
- Forms dense mats that shade-out native species and degrade water quality; can double its mass in 3 days

Photo Credit:

David Nicholls, denicholls.com, Bugwood.org

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