

Salvinia molesta

Giant Salvinia

Other common names:

kariba weed, velvet weed, watermoss,
cat's tongue, water spangles

Salviniaceae, the floating fern family

Category: **EDRR**



Diagnostic Characteristics

- Free-floating aquatic perennial that lacks flowers and seeds
- Leaves are 0.5 – 1.5 inches long, oblong, have distinct midvein, and are covered with stiff “eggbeater” shaped structures on the upper surface.
- Frond structures are stringy in appearance and resemble roots
- Fruiting structures (sporangia) on submersed leaves contain up to 64 spores

Background

- Native to south-eastern Brazil; introduced as an ornamental in water gardens
- Inhabits stagnant waters of rivers, lakes, ponds, canals, and ditches
- Reproduces by spores; can survive in moist soils
- Forms dense mats that shade-out native species and degrade water quality; can double mass in 4-10 days

Photo Credit:

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