

Media Release

Wanted: Weed Warriors

The State Government is urging garden lovers to become weed warriors and help in the battle to eradicate *Limnocharis*, an exotic, aquatic weed, from Queensland ponds and waterways. This weed is similar in appearance to water hyacinth though much larger, up to one metre in height. *Limnocharis* has small, cup-shaped, yellow flowers.

Since the first recorded case in 2001, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Water (NRMW), has identified 17 infestations of *Limnocharis* in North Queensland. The five-year control program has now reduced the incidence to just three active infestations.

Dr Kylie Galway, project coordinator (NRMW), said the Four Tropical Weeds Eradication Program has been extremely successful. Staff from the Department, together with local council officers, are very close to eliminating *Limnocharis* from mainland Australia.

"Although we have been able to effectively contain and control known infestations of this weed, we now need to make sure that there are no other plants hiding in backyard ponds and local waterways.

"We are asking members of the community as well as government agencies to keep an eye out for the weed and report any suspicious plants," Dr Galway said.

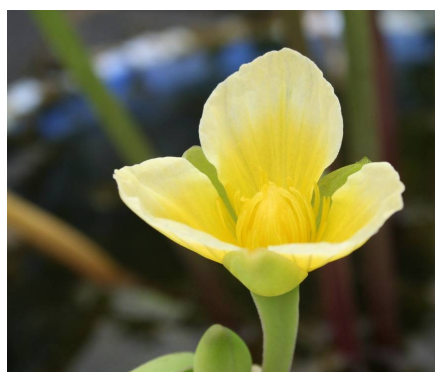
Limnocharis flava is an anchored, clump-forming, aquatic weed well known for its stunning yellow flowers and triangular shaped stem.

Dr Galway said enthusiastic gardeners introduced the plant to Australia, probably without considering the devastating impact it could have on the environment.

"In Asia, *Limnocharis* has severely hindered agricultural production by infesting rice paddies, irrigation channels and drainage ditches.

"It is fair to say that *Limnocharis* also poses a serious threat to agricultural production and biodiversity in Australia," she said.

In Queensland, *Limnocharis* is a Class 1 Declared Plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. Similarly, in NSW, it is listed as W1 (a notifiable weed). As a result, it is an offence to spread and sell this plant and it must be destroyed when it is found. People who suspect they have seen *Limnocharis* should contact NRMW on 1800 999 367. For more information on *Limnocharis* or for a fact sheet visit: www.nrm.qld.gov.au/pests



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