



Hydrilla

(Hydrilla verticillata)



Hydrilla

Instant ID

- An underwater plant
- Grows in mats of stems up to 25 feet long
- Leaves just over 1/2 inch long and wreath the stem at regular intervals
- Has tiny flowers on the tips of stems which reach the surface

Hijacked Habitats

- Native to Asia
- First sold as an aquarium plant in the 1950s in Florida
- Spread throughout Florida's waterways by the 1970s
- Found in all types of freshwater from a few inches to 20 feet deep
- Can handle 7% salinity (salt)
- Needs very little sunlight, can grow in shade





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Plant Particulars

- Single tuber (potato-like growth) can produce over 6,000 new tubers
- Tubers can remain viable (able to produce a new plant) up to four years after removal from the plant
- Stems grow up to 1 inch a day and clog waterways

Population Prevention

- Sale of hydrilla is prohibited in the state of Florida
- Thoroughly cleaning boats before leaving the ramp can prevent the spread of hydrilla to new waters
- Although mechanical, chemical and biological controls have been used; a perfect removal system has yet to be discovered

