



Water Hyacinth

Water Hyacinth *(Eichhornia crassipes)*

Instant ID

- A floating plant with a central spike of 8-15 lavender flowers
- Flowers have 6 petals and the top petal has a yellow spot
- Round leaves have a bladder (balloon-like structure) which floats on the water's surface
- It can reach 12 inches tall, but is often shorter

Hijacked Habitats

- Believed to be introduced to Louisiana during an expo in 1884, it quickly spread to Florida
- Native to Brazil
- Grows floating on the surface or rooted in the bed of fresh water
- Now spread worldwide where winter freezes are not severe





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Plant Particulars

- The damaging growth in one acre can weigh over 200 tons
- Reproduces by seeds and by budding (growth and breaking off) of new plants
- Incredibly fast growth rate means it can quickly clog waterways for animals, swimmers and boats

Population Prevention

- It can block sunlight and kill native submerged plants
- Can lead to eventual collapse of a habitat
- Fortunately many control methods have been developed
- Unfortunately constant control is needed to maintain freshwater habitats

