

Brazilian Elodea

Egeria densa

Brazilian elodea was listed as a Class B weed in the State of Washington in 1993. Elodea is an ornamental aquatic plant that is used primarily for fish aquariums. Infestations can alter aquatic ecosystems, trapping sediment and degrading water quality. It forms dense mats that shade out other native aquatic plants, inhibits water flow, and recreational activities. It can be found in still and flowing waters such as lakes, ponds, streams and ditches.

Introduced elodea has only male flowers. The flowers are white, have 3 petals, and are on threadlike stems. It reproduces by roots and plant fragments. The lower leaves appear in whorls (spirals) of 3, and the upper leaves appear in whorls of 4 to 8. They are minutely serrated, linear, and bright green. The stems grow upright until reaching the surface and then branch, forming a dense mat of growth.

Control is difficult once a population is established. Small sites may be covered with the use of an opaque fabric that blocks light from the plant. There has been small success using grass carp.

There is a native elodea that may be confused with Brazilian elodea. Waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*) is much smaller and less robust.

