

# WEED INFORMATION SHEET

# SALVINIA



*Salvinia molesta* - An introduced fern from South America that is a Weed of National Significance for the whole of Australia.

This fern spreads by fragmentation, and under optimum conditions it can double the area it covers in 5-10 days. Capable of choking wetlands, killing fish, reducing water quality and harbouring disease-bearing vectors.

**DESCRIPTION** - Free-floating fern. The main axis fragments easily, but plants are commonly up to 30 cm long. Leaves in whorls of 3, the upper 2 with a folded lamina, the lower much divided and rootlike, submerged. Floating leaves shortly stalked, 1 - 4 cm long and 1 - 5 cm wide, flat when in open water, folded when plants are crowded in dense mat. Upper surface covered with "basket" hairs.

**HABITAT** - Stationary and slow moving water bodies, especially where nutrient levels are high.

Photo's by K.Bunn, G Pritchard &  
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