

The Weed Spotter challenge

water hyacinth summer survey

Yes, it's time that Victorian Weed Spotters were tested!

The challenge? It's easy!

From the 1st to the 15th of December 2008, the Weed Alert team are asking you to visit a local water body as part of your normal day to day activities (a pond in a garden, a dam, a lake, a creek, a stream, a river) to see if you can spot any water hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes* (see picture). The plant should be flowering during this time of year and has a very distinctive purple flower making it easy to spot and highly visible.

Who

You. A valuable member of Weed Spotters.

What, Where and When

Step 1: Register your participation by going to www.dpi.vic.gov.au/weedspotters or fill in the attached form and post to the address provided.

Step 2: Between the 1st and the 15th of December visit a local water body and have a quick look for water hyacinth. (You can do more than one if you so desire).

Step 3: Whether you have found it or not, **fill in and return the survey form/s provided by the 20th of December.** Even if you did not find any water hyacinth, it is important that you return the form/s. All areas searched will be entered on our database and will assist in planning future survey work.

Safety

Your safety is our priority, so while doing your inspection be mindful of the surroundings. Ideally go with another person; always let someone know where you are and how long you will be; avoid steep and, muddy banks and fast flowing water, particularly after rain. We ask that you **do not** enter water bodies to closely inspect the plants. A pair of binoculars should do the trick if you are inspecting a larger body of water. If you are not sure about the plants identification, take a picture and send it in with your survey form/s.

Ideal places to search are still or slow moving water bodies. If you are planning to look at a creek or river, the best spot will likely to be in one of the bends where water is flow reduced. Again, you are not required to check the entire length of the creek. Target some easily accessible areas.

Why

Imagine if ALL 1 700 Weed Spotters participated? That would be unprecedented and would go down in Australian weed busting history?



What is water hyacinth?

Water hyacinth is one of the world’s most serious aquatic weeds and in Victoria is a State Prohibited weed. It is an aggressive plant capable of rapidly degrading still or slow moving fresh water bodies. Dense mats exclude other aquatic plants and destroy habitat for native fauna. As is Weed Spotter policy, never attempt to remove any of the plant/s yourself. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) will send in the professionals to remove the infestation.

This year alone, the DPI has removed five newly discovered infestations of water hyacinth.

Looking forward to your response and thankyou, we really appreciate your participation.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Do you work for or volunteer in an industry or group involved in weeds? Yes No

If yes, which industry or group? _____

Please send this form to Weed Spotter Coordinator, Department of Primary Industries, PO Box 103, Geelong, VIC, 3220.

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For further information, visit the DPI Website at www.dpi.vic.gov.au or contact the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186