

Agriculture Protection Board
Advisory Leaflet No. 41
August 1978
Agdex No. 647
77302/6/78-10M-S/5681

LEAFY ELODEA



This plant has the potential to become a menace on waterways, causing obstructions and destroying the habitat of native birds and fish. It is a declared plant (noxious weed) and may not be imported or kept in Western Australia (*continued overleaf*).

LEAFY ELODEA

Leafy elodea (*Egeria densa*) is a potentially troublesome aquatic weed in Western Australia. When established it can obstruct irrigation channels, freshwater lakes and river systems and compete with native species. Leafy elodea is a native of South America. It was introduced into Western Australia as an aquarium plant. Leafy elodea is a declared plant (noxious weed) in Western Australia. It cannot be imported into the state or kept here and all plants present must be destroyed. This is best done by drying out and burning the plants.

Description:

Leafy elodea is a perennial aquatic

weed which grows completely submerged in water.

Its soft, green leaves are crowded in groups of three to seven at each joint on the stem. The leaf edges are sometimes smooth and sometimes have fine serrations. The plant spreads almost entirely by vegetative reproduction. The stems break into segments in the autumn. New plants grow from small buds on these pieces of stem in the following spring. The flowers are large with three white petals. These are the only parts of the plant which reach the water surface. The male and female flowers are found on separate plants in the summer,

but very few female flowers are produced. When both types of flower do occur together pollination takes place above the surface and some viable seed can be produced.

Urgent action is essential to eradicate isolated patches of Leafy elodea, to prevent the weed getting established.

Suspect plants should be reported to the Agriculture Protection Board, telephone PERTH (09) 367 0111

or any country officer of the Agriculture Protection Board or Department of Agriculture.