

Marsilea mutica

COMMON NAME

nardoo

FAMILY

Marsileaceae

AUTHORITY

Marsilea mutica Mett.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A perennial fern with slender, rooted branching rhizomes and erect leaves (sterile fronds) along their length. The mature leaf resemble a four leaf clover and consists of four oblanceolate to egg/wedge shaped, glabrous to hairy leaflets at the apex of a slender stalk; leaflets are held more or less horizontally, or they may fold up on one another, each with numerous, fine, close-set longitudinal veins. The young developing leaves near the rhizome are filiform with coiled tips (fern like). Sporocarps are mostly produced by plants growing on drying mud, and rarely on those in the water.

DISTRIBUTION

Introduced and Naturalised. New Zealand: North Island (farm ponds at Hunua (South Auckland) and Paraparaumu (Wellington) and ornamental ponds elsewhere). Indigenous to Australia and New Caledonia.

HABITAT

Plants are either aquatic or on mud, mostly in areas subject to at least temporary inundation. When the plants are growing in the water they have floating leaflets.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

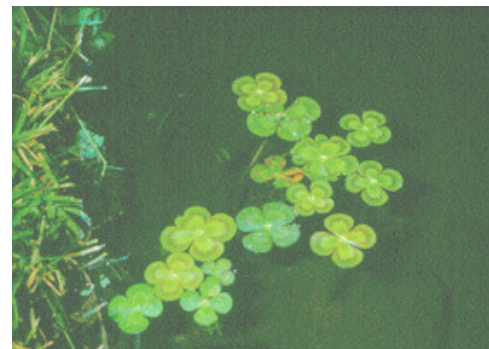
Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Characterised by floating, clover like-fronds with four leaflets, can also be emergent from shallow water. **Rhizome** is glabrous, although there are a few hairs at the nodes that bear roots. **Leaves** are solitary and occur at intervals along the rhizome. **Leaf stalks** are 5–25 cm long in terrestrial forms, but may be longer in aquatic forms, up to 90 cm. **Leaflets** are mostly green, but also yellowish in the centre and have a brown demarcation line at the leaflet margin. The leaflets, four together, are smaller in terrestrial forms (1–5 cm) and c. 4–8 cm diameter in aquatic forms. **Sporocarps** occur most frequently in 2–4 on a branched pedicel, which arises from the base of the leaf-stalk or on short branches that are attached to the leaf stalk a few millimetres from its base.

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers



Marsilea mutica. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cultivation, Auckland. Jan 2007.
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LIFE CYCLE

Vegetative fragments and by spores.

YEAR NATURALISED

1988

ORIGIN

Native to Australia and New Caledonia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond plant

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson PN, Brooke PA. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington, NZ. 319 p.

Aston H. 1977. Aquatic plants of Australia. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, AUS. 367 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/marsilea-mutica/>