

# Elodea canadensis

## COMMON NAME

Canadian pondweed

## FAMILY

Hydrocharitaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Elodea canadensis* Michaux

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## NVS CODE

ELOCAN

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Submerged, bottom rooted perennial aquatic plant in the oxygenweed group, that grows in both still and flowing waters. The stems are brittle and pale with bright green leaves occurring in whorls of three, and often with little space between each whorl. Flowers are inconspicuous.

## DISTRIBUTION

Widely naturalised through the North and South Islands.

## HABITAT

Aquatic: a submerged plant in moderately fast flowing to still water bodies.

## FEATURES

Submerged, bottom-rooting perennial, growing to 8+ m. Stems slender, brittle, branched, 1 mm diameter leaves in whorls of 3 (opposite at base), linear, 6-12 x 2 mm, translucent dark green. Male (very rare) and female flowers on separate plants. Flowers on surface, on long thread-like stalks, 5-petalled, 5 mm diam, white, tinged purple. No seed set in NZ.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Egeria* (*Egeria densa*) and *lagarosiphon* (*Lagarosiphon major*). Canadian pondweed is much smaller than *egeria* and almost always has leaves arranged in whorls of 3 compared with *egeria* which is usually in whorls of at least 4. *Lagarosiphon* has leaves that curl downwards and are arranged in spirals around the stem (not whorls).

## FLOWERING

November, December, January

## FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple

## FRUITING

No fruit seen in NZ

## LIFE CYCLE

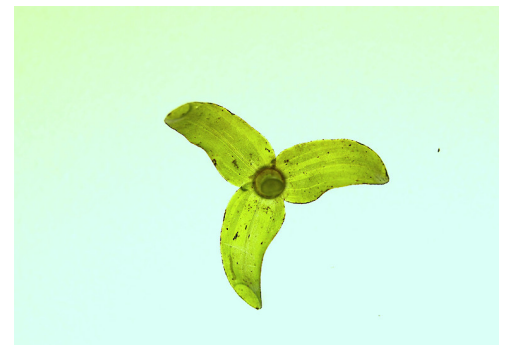
Reproduces by vegetative fragmentation from stem material and dispersed within catchments via water flow. New catchments invaded by contaminated boats and trailers (occasionally motor cooling water), eel nets, diggers, people liberating fish, floods from ornamental ponds. Sold in the aquarium trade.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1872



Underwater plants. Photographer: Rohan Wells, NIWA



Leaves. Photographer: Rohan Wells, NIWA

## ORIGIN

North America.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental aquarium plant.

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of water temperatures up to 28 degrees C. Requires moderate to high light.

## ETYMOLOGY

**elodea**: From the Greek elodes 'marsh'

**canadensis**: Of Canada

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

Coffey BT, Clayton JS (1988). New Zealand water plants: a guide to plants found in New Zealand freshwaters. Ruakura Agricultural Centre. 65pp.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/elodea-canadensis/>