Hydrocotyle verticillata

**COMMON NAME**
pennywort

**FAMILY**
Araliaceae

**AUTHORITY**
Hydrocotyle verticillata Thunb.

**FLORA CATEGORY**
Vascular – Exotic

**STRUCTURAL CLASS**
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

**CONSERVATION STATUS**
Not applicable

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**
A marginal, occasionally submerged aquatic plant, with creeping stems and round leaves, the stalk attached in its centre.

**DISTRIBUTION**
Only known from a stream in Hawke's Bay and Tauranga, Bay of Plenty.

**HABITAT**
Still and slow flowing water bodies and wetlands.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**
Slender emergent or submerged, creeping, glabrous perennial herb. Leaves alternate, peltate, orbiculate with crenate margins, up to 60 mm across. Petiole up to 30 cm long. Inflorescence of several whorls of subsessile flowers c. 1 mm across, pinkish green. Fruit 4 mm across, with prominent ribs.

**SIMILAR TAXA**
No similar species in aquatic habitats.

**FLOWERING**
Summer

**FLOWER COLOURS**
Green, Red/Pink

**FRUITING**
Summer to autumn

**LIFE CYCLE**
Spreads by water dispersed fragments, deliberate planting or aquarium discards.

**YEAR NATURALISED**
1995

**ORIGIN**
North Central and South America, West Indies.

**REASON FOR INTRODUCTION**
Ornamental pond and aquarium plant.

**CONTROL TECHNIQUES**
Not controlled in New Zealand.
ETYMOLOGY
hydrocotyle: From the Greek hydor 'water' and cotyle 'cup', in reference to the cup-like hollow at the base if the leaf.

ATTRIBUTION
Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hydrocotyle-verticillata/