

Cabomba caroliniana

Have you seen this aquatic weed?



Biosecurity New Zealand, in partnership with Auckland Council, has initiated an eradication response to the invasive aquatic weed, *Cabomba caroliniana*. The weed has been found in storm water ponds at a site in West Auckland.



Cabomba caroliniana. Credit: Rohan Wells (NIWA)

Cabomba is a well-known aquarium plant. However, it has now been found growing in storm water ponds in the Paremuka Reserve, West Auckland. We don't know how it became established there, but dumping of aquarium matter into the ponds is the likely cause.

It is a known invasive aquatic weed overseas, and has the potential to be a significant environmental pest in New Zealand's fresh water systems.

Cabomba caroliniana is an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993. It is illegal to breed, knowingly communicate, exhibit, multiply, propagate, release, or sell this Unwanted Organism.

If you have *Cabomba* in an aquarium, double bag the plants and dispose of these at your local landfill or with general household refuse. DO NOT dispose of plants into or near waterways.

If you have seen this plant in the natural environment, take a close up photo of the plant (if possible), record its location and call the Biosecurity New Zealand Pests and Diseases Hotline – 0800 80 99 66.



Cabomba growing prolifically in two storm water ponds in Auckland. Credit: Paul Champion (NIWA)

How to identify *Cabomba*

- *Cabomba* is an herbaceous, submerged, rooted aquatic perennial. It can also survive in a free-floating state for six to eight weeks.
- *Cabomba* often grows in water from 0.4 – 1.2m and up to 6m deep.
- The plant has both submersed and floating leaves. Submersed leaves are oppositely arranged and 1 – 3.5 x 1.5 – 5.5cm on petioles up to 4cm long and finely dissected.
- Floating leaves are blades 0.6 – 3 cm x 1 – 4mm with margins either notched or entire at base.
- Flowers are white to purplish or yellow.

We need you to alert us if *Cabomba* has been observed in fresh water environments elsewhere in New Zealand.



Comparison with Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), which is also an Unwanted Organism. Credit: Rohan Wells (NIWA)