



SALVINIA

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is taking action to contain an infestation of the aggressive aquatic weed *Salvinia molesta* in Papamoa.

The infestation is in the Wairakei Stream, and a survey will take place to understand how far it has spread. You may have seen signs put up by the Tauranga City Council indicating that you need to avoid this area, and prevent children and animals entering the waterway.

MPI, in collaboration with the Tauranga City Council, and Bay of Plenty Regional Council will be undertaking the salvinia control work to eradicate the infestation.

This is a long-term project, and it can take several years to completely eradicate this weed. MPI and the other organisations supporting this work will be discussing the eradication process with local residents and iwi over the next few months.

Why is salvinia a pest?

Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is a rapidly growing freshwater plant that forms large dense floating mats that can completely cover entire waterbodies. It can double its size in just two weeks in the sub-tropical temperatures of Northland. In warmer conditions, it can double its weight in just over two days.

The dense mats of salvinia crowd out native water plants and cause the loss of open water and nesting sites for waterfowl. They also shade and decrease oxygen levels in the water, affecting water quality and submerged plants and animals such as freshwater mussels.

The floating mats can affect flood control and block hydroelectricity turbines and irrigation systems. They also increase the risk of drowning for people and livestock and prevent boats and other recreational uses of water bodies.

Salvinia is spread by water currents, animals, and contaminated equipment such as boats and trailers.

Salvinia is one of the pests being eradicated under the National Interest Pest Response Programme led and funded by MPI in collaboration with regional councils and the Department of Conservation. It is both a notifiable organism and an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and is banned from sale, propagation and distribution.

What does salvinia look like?

Salvinia is a free-floating fern that forms rosettes. Young plants have small pale green leaves that lie flat on the surface of the water and are attached to a horizontal stem just below the water surface. Mature plants are brownish and more crowded, form dense mats and have root like structures hanging down into the water.

What should I do if I find salvinia?

You can help us to get rid of salvinia. If you have seen it or suspect you have seen it, please contact the Bay of Plenty Regional Council on **0800 STOP PESTS (0800 786 773)** or call MPI's pest and disease hotline on **0800 80 99 66**.

For ongoing updates about the eradication work please email salvinia@mpi.govt.nz and ask to be subscribed.

More information is available at www.mpi.govt.nz/salvinia

