

SPECIES: *PONTEDERIA CRASSIPES*

COMMON NAME: WATER HYACINTH

FAMILY: PONTEDERIACEAE

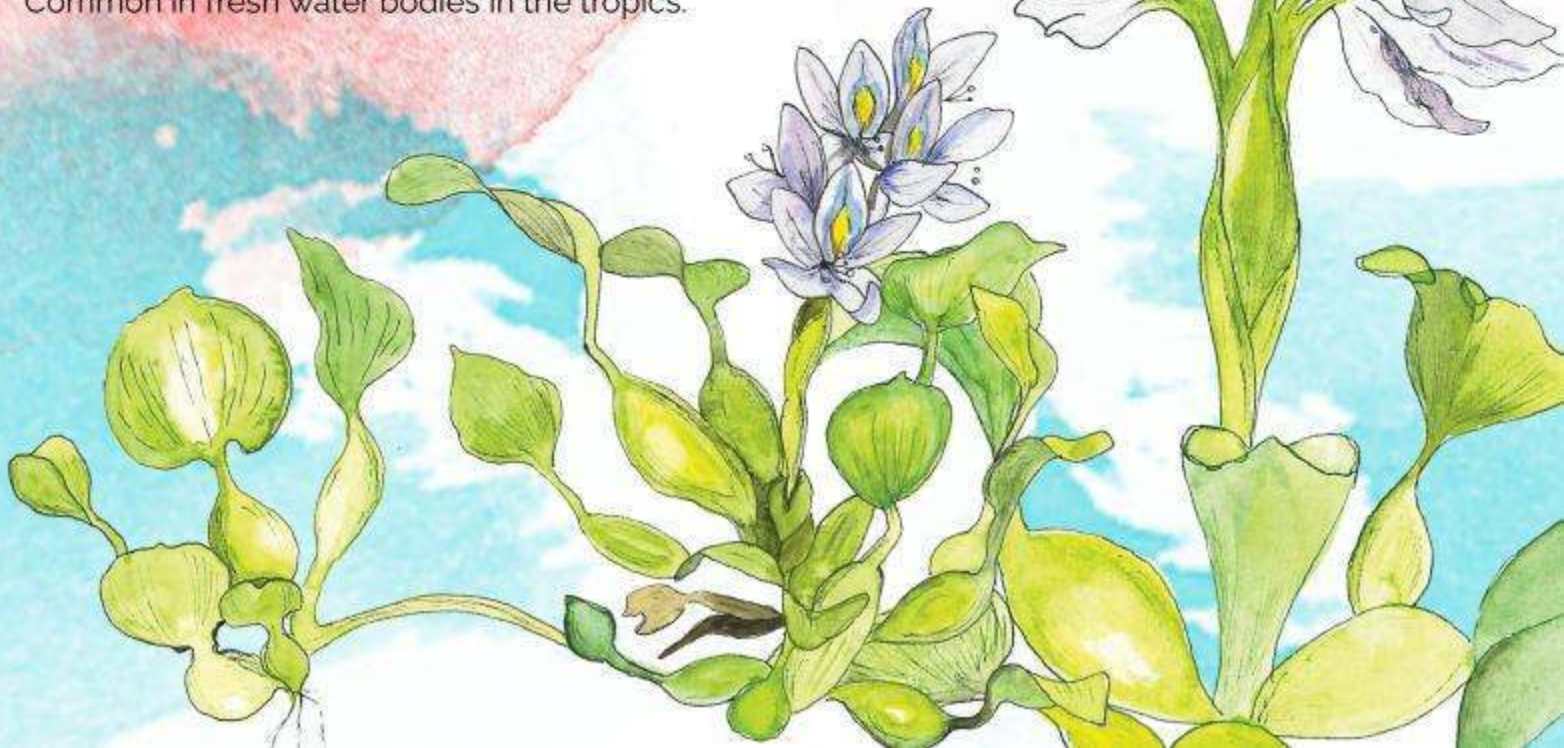


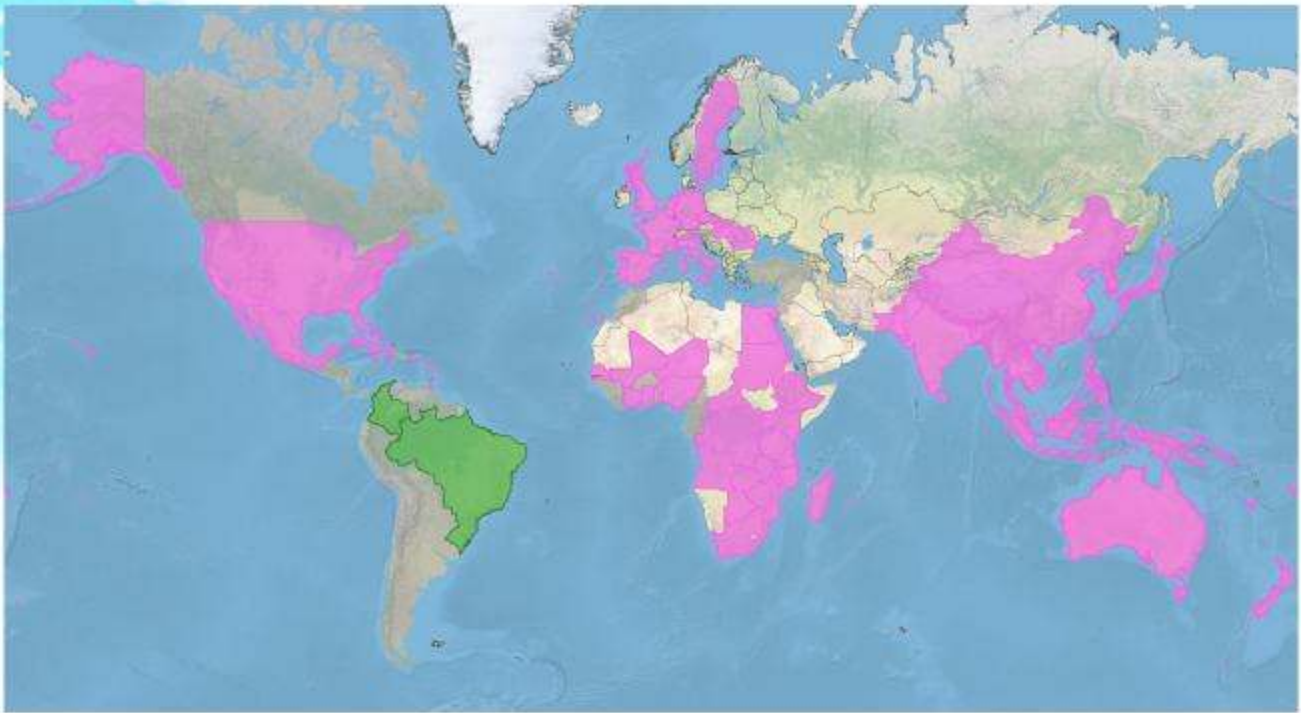
Plant Description

A floating herb, which can gain up to 1m in height, it is fairly widespread.

The striking mauve to purple flowers are in the form of spikes and each flower has around 6 lobes. The main lobe has a bright yellow diamond shaped patch which is quite prominent. The leaves are rounded and have thick swollen petioles.

Common in fresh water bodies in the tropics.





Source: CABI, 2022. *Eichhornia crassipes*. In: Invasive Species Compendium. Wallingford, UK: CAB International. <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/20544#toDistributionMaps> [accessed: 25/01/2022]

■ Introduced
■ Native
■ Origin not recorded

***Pontederia crassipes* (Also known as *Eichhornia crassipes*) PONTEDERIACEAE**

Origin: South America (Brazil and Ecuador)

Introduction: First recorded from Bengal in 1896 when it was brought in as an ornamental plant.

Impacts: The plant spreads rapidly and replaces other aquatic vegetation, reducing water quality, affecting fish and other aquatic species that live in fresh water. Its spread poses difficulties for navigation, irrigation, hydroelectric power generation and tourism activities. Water bodies choked with *Eichhornia* have also become breeding grounds for mosquitoes and pose a threat to health. However, research has shown that the plant can remove contaminants from water and can be used in biotreatment of wastewater.

Management: Removal through physical or mechanical means seems to be the most effective way to control the spread of the plant. Biological control using fungus species (e.g., *Alternaria alternate*) has also been tested. In some regions the plant has been harvested to make biochar for soil restoration.