

Egeria

Botanical name: Egeria densa

Family: Hydrocharitaceae (Frogbit family)

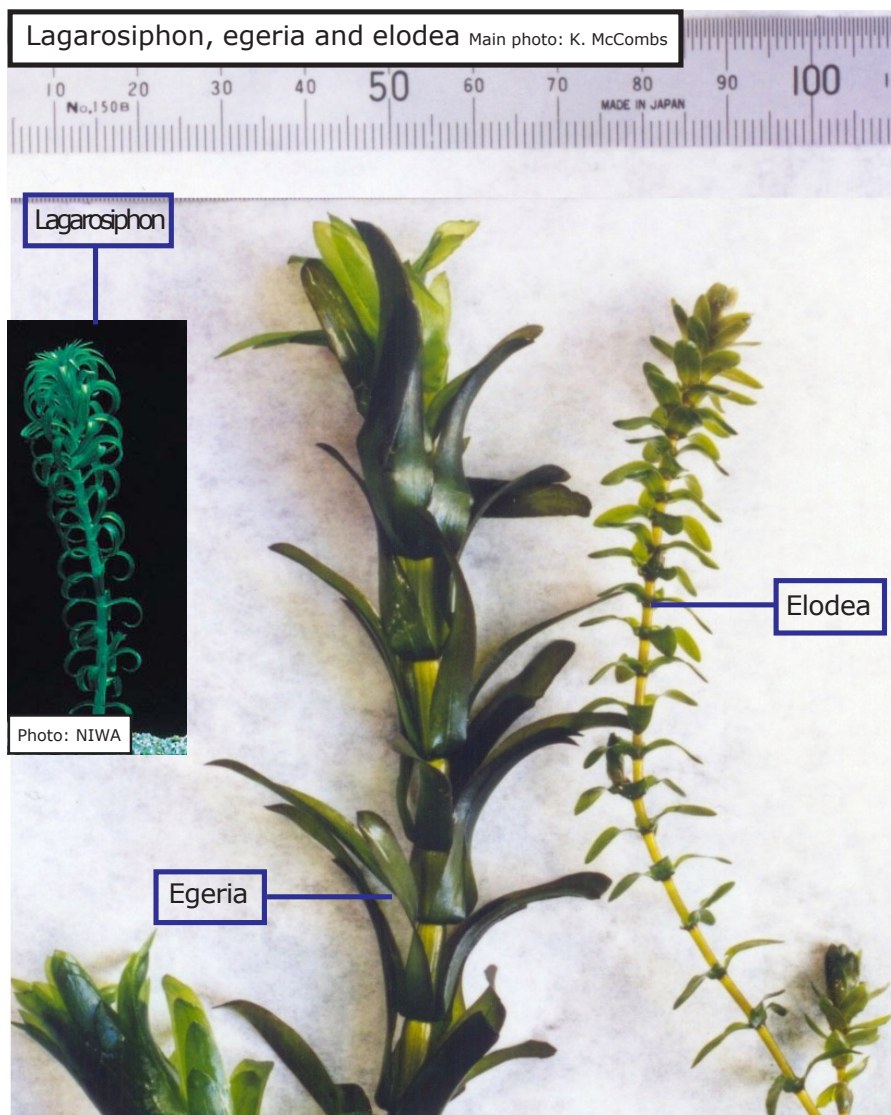
Identification

- Aquatic plant.
- Leaves dark green, up to 40 mm long and 2-5 mm wide.
- Leaves join onto the stems in groups of 4 or more. Lower leaves may arise in 3's.
- Stems multi-branched, 3 mm in diameter and they break easily.
- Plants are usually totally submerged, but egeria can grow right to the water surface and form a tangled mat.
- Flowers have 3 white petals.



Egeria Photo: K. McCombs

Egeria can be confused with 2 other oxygen weeds. Canadian pondweed (Elodea) has smaller leaves arranged in groups of 3 around the stem. Lagarosiphon has leaves arranged in a spiral around the stem and the leaves curl downwards. Egeria is larger than the other 2 oxygen weed species and is the only oxygen weed in NZ with visible white flowers.



Lagarosiphon, egeria and elodea Main photo: K. McCombs

Lagarosiphon

Elodea

Egeria

Photo: NIWA

Why is it a problem?

Egeria grows quickly in most water types. It is long lived, dense and will grow from any stem fragments. It forms dense stands that shade out native aquatic plants and destroys both animal and plant habitats. Rotting plants degrade the water quality for other species. Egeria is very difficult to kill.

Status

Egeria has been declared an **unwanted organism** in New Zealand and is listed as a **plant pest** in Canterbury. It cannot be sold, propagated or distributed.

Control

In Canterbury, report any Egeria found to Environment Canterbury. For more information email: weeds@ecan.govt.nz