

Parrot's feather

Myriophyllum aquaticum

Family Haloragaceae



Identification

- Freshwater weed.
- Pale blue/green leaves are feather-like and have a rounded tip.
- Leaves grow in groups of 4-6 around the stem.
- Stems can grow up to 10 cm above the water surface.
- Stems attach to the bottom of the waterbody and can grow up to 2 m long.



Parrot's feather. Photo: A. Paltridge (DOC)



Parrot's feather forming a dense mat over a stream. Photo: M. Hutchison.

Where is it found?

Parrot's feather has been found growing in the North Island, in the upper part of the South Island and on the West Coast. In Canterbury it has been found growing in private ponds.

Parrot's feather will grow in flowing or standing water, damp ground, shallow lakes, drains, mud banks and wetlands.

Similar species

Parrot's feather looks very similar to native myriophyllum species that grow in Canterbury waterways. Parrot's feather also appears similar to the unwanted organism Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*). To distinguish, Hornwort has distinctive forked leaves, while parrot's feather has finely divided leaves.

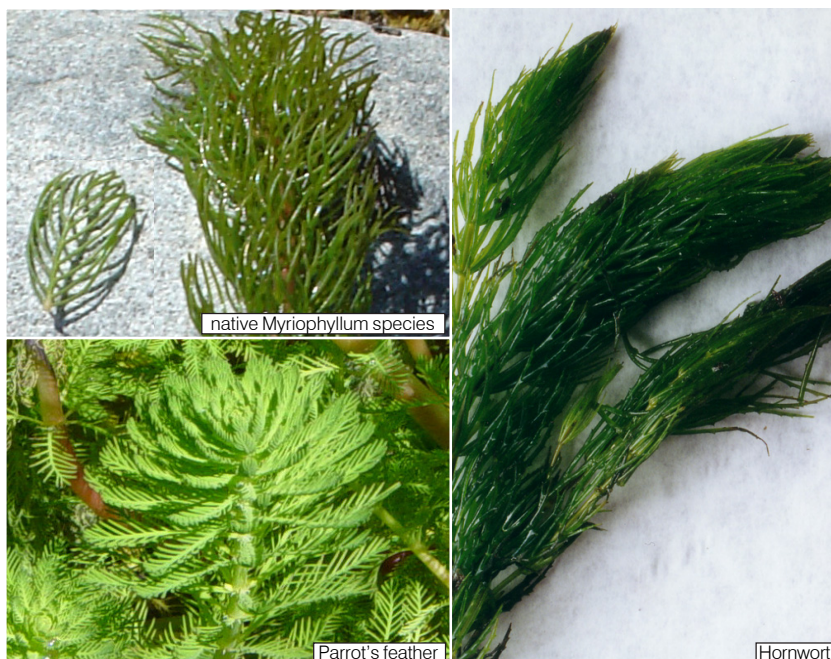
Why is it a problem?

Parrot's feather forms dense, surface-floating mats of vegetation, shading out and preventing native species from growing. It is easily spread by stem fragments.

Please report all sightings of Parrot's feather in Canterbury to weeds@ecan.govt.nz or phone the Potential Pest Line on (03) 363 9380.

Status

Parrot's feather is an unwanted organism. It is illegal to sell, propagate or distribute this species within New Zealand.



Similar species: native Myriophyllum species, parrot's feather and Hornwort.

Photos: S. Charteris, M. Hutchison and K. McCombs. (Photos not to scale).