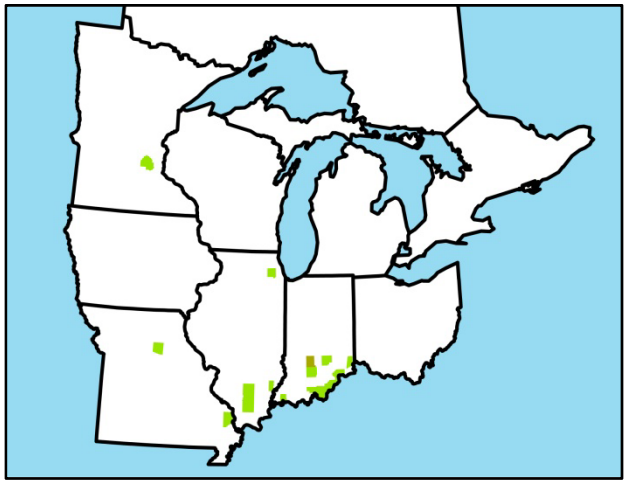
New Invasive Plants of the Midwest Fact Sheet

BRAZILIAN WATERWEED

Egeria densa

Description: Brazilian waterweed is an aquatic perennial herb. Its rooted stems are typically 1-2 feet long, although they can grow up to 20 feet. Stems and leaves are bright green. Stems are cylindrical and can be simple or branching. Leaves are 0.8-1.2 inches long, up to 0.2 inches wide, and form in whorls of 4-6 along plant stems. Whorls are regularly spaced, becoming more profuse toward the tip of the stem. Leaf margins have very fine teeth visible with magnification. Flowers are white, 0.7-1 inches across, with 3 petals, and float or rise above the water surface on short stalks. Brazilian waterweed can be confused with hydrilla, but hydrilla flowers are much smaller and form along long, thin stalks. Also, unlike hydrilla, Brazilian waterweed does not form tubers or other storage organs.



Current Midwest Distribution, including Ontario

- Not Known
- Isolated
- Locally Abundant
- Widespread

Photo credits: Amy Richard and Bill Haller, University of Florida/IFAS

Ecological threat: Brazilian waterweed is found in non-moving and moving waters, including lakes, ponds, pools, and streams. It forms dense stands, restricting water movement, trapping sediments, reducing water quality, and displacing native vegetation. Brazilian waterweed has been a popular aquarium plant and exists outside of cultivation from aquarium dumping and water gardens. It reproduces through plant fragments; fragments are dispersed by water birds and by attaching to boats.

Native Range: Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

Current North American Range: Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, western US, Texas to Florida to New England.

Brazilian waterweed is sold in the **aquatic plant trade.** Its sale is **prohibited** in Indiana and Michigan. It is **regulated** in Minnesota (it can be sold, but not released or planted in public waters).

For information on **aquatic plant management**, see http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ws/ws_21.pdf.

Early detection and rapid response can help stop the spread!

MIPN.org
Midwest Invasive Plant Network