

# “B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant,  
but may have limited distribution in some counties

**Parrots feather**  
*Myriophyllum aquaticum*

**Other common names:** Brazilian water milfoil

**USDA symbol:** MYAQ2  
**ODA rating:** B



**Introduction:** Native to South America and the Amazon River basin, parrots feather was introduced into the US for use in aquariums and water gardens. It is limited to shallow water and is not known to invade beyond its ability to root in the substrate.

**Distribution in Oregon:** Parrots feather has been reported in the Pacific Northwest since the 1940's and can now be found in many slow-moving waterways, lakes, ponds, and sloughs throughout Western Oregon.

**Description:** Parrots feather is an attractive aquatic plant with feathery lime-green leaves arranged in whorls on long floating stems (rhizomes). Flowers are small and white. The emerged parts of the plants are a distinctive trait resembling small fir trees growing up to a foot above the water. Parrots feather is found in freshwater lakes, ponds, streams, and canals thriving in high nutrient environments. It tends to colonize slow moving or still water rather than in areas with higher flow rates. The emergent stems can survive on wet banks of rivers and lakeshores, so it is well adapted to moderate water level fluctuations.

**Impacts:** Negative impacts result from the dense mat formation blocking sunlight and oxygen exchange. Heavily infested waters face reductions in native plant diversity and community structure, recreational use, fish production and alterations of water chemistry. Irrigation canal systems in California, experience flow restrictions and increased maintenance costs due to plant removal efforts. Mosquito populations are documented to increase significantly in infested waters.

**Biological controls:** No approved biological control agents are available.

