



Curly water-thyme - Lagarosiphon major

A perennial, aquatic plant which can grow up to 3m completely submerged under the water in chalk, gravel and clay pits, lakes, reservoirs and canals. First recorded in Britain in 1944 it is now well-established at many sites and is widely sold as an aquarium and garden pond plant. It can overwhelm ponds and outcompete native vegetation as well as choke up waterways, exacerbating flood risk and reducing amenity use.

Management Options:

Mechanical Cutting

Cut using the most appropriate equipment for the site, such as weed knives, trailing knives, chains, rakes, etc. The location should be netted to retain propagules.

Suitability: Cutting may have to be delayed until April in the North, where colder weather tends to make the plant die back. Effective if propagules can be prevented from spreading.

Equipment: Boats, drysuits, specialist cutting equipment, wheelbarrows, forks, rakes. Vehicle & trailer if not disposing at site. Stop-nets and sweep nets. Life jacket and any other personal protective equipment deemed necessary after risk assessment.

Efficiency: Moderate/Poor, depending on the efficiency of the equipment at the site. Submerged objects, such as tree trunks, will compromise efficiency.

Constraints: Requires good access and appropriate methods for waste management.

Manual Pulling

Hand-pull (if water depth allows) and dispose of material by composting away from water habitats.

Suitability: Only suitable in shallow areas, or at sites at which the water level can be dropped for management purposes. Curly water-thyme can grow to a depth of 3m.

Equipment: Boats, drysuits, wheelbarrows, forks, rakes. Vehicle & trailer if not disposing at site. Stop-nets and sweep nets. Life jacket and any other personal protective equipment deemed necessary after risk assessment.

Efficiency: Moderate/Poor, and of limited application to most sites.

Constraints: Time-consuming, and requires good access and appropriate methods of waste management.

Plant Suppression

Cover submerged growth with jute matting, weighted down with stones, as described by methodology developed by Central Fisheries Service, Ireland (now Inland Fisheries Ireland).

Suitability: Best in areas with an even substrate free from obstructions. Jute matting eventually biodegrades. Particularly good method at sites in which the plant has replaced native charophytes, which are able to grow through the weave of the matting a re-colonise within 2 months of deployment.

