

Alien plant species

Alien plant species could exacerbate flooding, increase the risk of runaway fires, reduce our natural water resources, impact on the natural functioning of ecosystems, and inhibit growth of indigenous vegetation. As required by law, they must be removed.

Five aquatic alien species you can help remove



Kariba weed (*Salvinia molesta*)



Parrot's feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)



Red water fern (*Azolla filiculoides*)



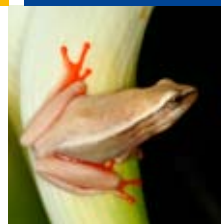
Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*)



Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)

Tips for removal of alien plant species

- Eradication methods vary from hand removal or mechanical removal to approved chemical and biological control.
- Start clearing from a point as far as possible upstream, and work in a downstream direction.
- Start from the highest point on the bank, and move downwards.
- Stockpile cleared plants away from the river, and remove within a week to a City-controlled dump site.
- Regular follow-up clearing is essential.
- Work with your neighbours.



Contact details

If you need any additional information, please feel free to use the following contact numbers:

City of Cape Town
Catchment, Stormwater & River Management:
Tel: 021 400 1205

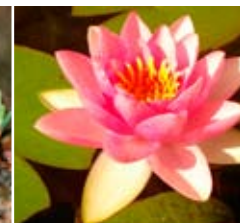
Environmental Resource Management:
Tel: 021 710 8000

SANBI
Working for Wetlands:
Tel: 021 799 8848/8736

Department of Water and Environmental Affairs
Working for Water
Tel: 021 976 8136

Photographic credits

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Sm - Salvinia molesta - Larry Maupin
Af - Azolla filiculoides - Forest & Kim Starr
Ma - Myriophyllum aquaticum - Andre' Karwath
Ec - Eichhornia crassipes - Ted Center
Ps - Pistia stratiotes - Dinesh Valke



RIVERS AND WETLANDS IN OUR BACKYARDS



CITY OF CAPE TOWN | ISIXEKO SASEKAPA | STAD KAAPSTAD

THIS CITY WORKS FOR YOU

Why our rivers and wetlands are important

If you are privileged enough to have a river flowing through the boundaries of your property, or to have a wetland nearby, this is why these aquatic ecosystems are so important:

- Rivers and wetlands form 'green corridors', which provide habitat, and sustain a great diversity of aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal life.
- Rivers are an essential part of the hydrological cycle, and in urban environments convey stormwater back to the sea.
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems deliver many goods and services, e.g. regulating flow, attenuating floods and removing pollutants.
- Rivers and wetlands have irrefutable aesthetic and recreational value, and if managed correctly, will continue to enrich our lives into the future.

What the law says about rivers and wetlands

National Water Act

You, as landowner, must take all responsible measures to prevent pollution of aquatic systems. Should any pollution occur, the polluter/landowner will be held responsible, and will be liable for the rehabilitation costs.

Stormwater Management Bylaw & Policies

You, as landowner, are responsible to ensure that the river system functions effectively in the absence of any impediments. We need to protect our floodplains and ecological buffers, and divert construction activities from these areas. Also take note that only stormwater is permitted in the stormwater system.

National Environmental Management Act

You may have to undertake an environmental impact assessment if you are planning any –

- construction within 32 m from the river bank (i.e. buildings, bridges and walls); or
- dredging, excavation, infilling, removal or moving of soil, sand or rock exceeding 5 m³ from a river, stream, tidal river, in-stream dam, floodplain or wetland.



Indigenous species you should plant

It is important to keep the aquatic system as natural as possible for it to perform its vital functions. The following indigenous plant species are recommended for any planting or restoration:

Trees:

True yellowwood (*Podocarpus latifolius*)
Red alder (*Cunonia capensis*)
Wild almond (*Brabejum stellatifolium*)
Wild peach (*Kiggelaria africana*)

Shrubs, groundcover & aquatic plants:

Arum lily (*Zantedeschia aethiopica*)
Red-hot poker (*Kniphofia uvaria*)
Cobra lily/piempiempie (*Chasmanthe floribunda*)
Tabakbos (*Senecio halimifolius*)
Wild orchard (*Cliffortia odorata*)
Elegia/dekriet (*Chondropetalum tectorum*)
Sedge/stergras (*Ficinia radiata*)
Watsonia/suurknol (*Watsonia spp.*)
Palmiet/palm rush (*Prionium serratum*)
Waterblommetjies (*Aponogeton distachyos*)
Water lily (*Nymphaea nouchali* var. *caerulea*)
Floating hearts (*Nymphoides indica*)

Alien plant species you should remove and avoid planting

Please avoid planting the following species, and where they already grow replace them with suitable indigenous options:

Giant or Spanish reeds (*Arundo donax*)
Wild ginger lily species (*Hedychium spp.*)
Grey poplars (*Populus X canescens*)
Weeping willows (*Salix babylonica*)
English oak (*Quercus robur*)
Black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*)
Kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*)
Watercress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*)
Castor-oil plant (*Canna spp.*)
Brambles/blackberries (*Rubus spp.*)
St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)
Red sesbania (*Sesbania punicea*)

Looking after the river/wetland on or near your property

ALWAYS:

- be aware that your garden and the stream may be home to important indigenous species, e.g. the Western leopard toad, Cape galaxia, and Cape kurper;
- clear alien invasive plant species;
- retain a buffer zone between your garden and the stream channel or wetland, and vegetate it with local indigenous plants;
- plant a 'rain garden', or introduce appropriate stormwater treatment/infiltration measures to ensure the stream/wetland is not contaminated by runoff from your property;
- vegetate and, where necessary, protect eroding river banks with the City's advice and consent;
- provide a gradual sloping river bank;
- ensure fences abutting and crossing riverine corridors and wetlands (including boundary structures) are permeable (timber picket or palisade) to allow for faunal movement and the natural movement of water;
- check and maintain your septic tank; and
- work with your neighbours.

DO NOT:

- alter the watercourse or flow regime;
- dam the river;
- abstract water for any purpose without first obtaining written consent from the City;
- direct swimming pool overflow/discharge into the river or wetland;
- fill in the floodplain or ecological buffer adjacent to the river;
- plant alien and invasive plant species, or introduce alien fauna, such as fish from your fish tank/pond;
- use pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers in areas adjacent to aquatic systems;
- hose down dirty paved surfaces; and
- dump domestic or garden refuse, pet waste, building rubble, chemicals or discharge-contaminated water into the aquatic system.