

MEDIA RELEASE

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Spraying set to eradicate aquatic weeds in Wangaratta

A new weed control program along the One Mile Creek in Wangaratta will control and eradicate some deceptively attractive aquatic weeds.

A new report commissioned by the North East Catchment Management Authority has identified key infestations of aquatic weeds such as *Parrot's Feather*, *Yellow Waterlilly* and *Sweet Flag* throughout the Wangaratta urban area.

In response to the report findings, the North East CMA and Rural City of Wangaratta will next week start spraying weeds along One Mile Creek that are an emerging threat to river health.

"Some plants in our waterways look deceptively pretty but they actually have a detrimental effect on native aquatic plants and water," said Peter Sacco, North East CMA River Health Operations Manager.

Control of Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) will be the first priority.

The CMA and Council have jointly developed a management plan for Parrot's Feather throughout the One Mile Creek that will involve spraying three times a year until the weed is eradicated.

The CMA, Council and Goulburn Murray Water Aquatic Specialists will begin spraying next Monday (2 February) in the area from Appin Park to Roy Street.

Mr Sacco said residents should not be alarmed if they see dead or dying plants along One Mile Creek in coming weeks.

"The response of aquatic weeds is similar to land based weeds – they turn brown and die. While this can be ugly, it's a necessary stage of weed eradication."

The North East CMA WaterWatch program will soon start macro-invertebrate and water quality sampling along the One Mile Creek at the locations where the Parrot's Feather has been identified.

"This will give us important base line data to use for monitoring the affect of this aquatic weed and to inform our ongoing management plan for eradicating it," explained Mr Sacco.

Wangaratta residents can also play a part in the future control of aquatic weeds.

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“ Many of these weeds spread into waterways as garden escapees so we urge people not to dump garden clippings, plants or fish from fish tanks into the creek. For example, Parrot’s Feather is commonly used in fish tanks,” concluded Mr Sacco.

The North East CMA and Rural City of Wodonga will continue to work together to control and eradicate aquatic weeds in Wangaratta, particularly; Water Poppy (*Hydrocleys nymphoides*), Yellow Waterlily (*Nymphaea Mexicana*), Taro (*Colocasia esulenta*), Sweet Flag (*Acorus Calamus*) Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), and Umbrella Sedge (*Cyperus involucratus*).

For further information please contact:

- Peter Sacco River Health Operations Manager, North East CMA
Tel: (02) 6043 7621 Mob: **0419 361 772**

- Mary-Anne Scully, CMA Media & Communications – Tel: **0408 685 225**

Parrot’s Feather – some FAQ’s

Q. What does Parrot’s Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) look like and where does it come from?

- Parrot’s Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) is originally from South America. It is a perennial aquatic herb that is submerged beneath the water, with emergent feathery leaves. It is commonly found in shallow water bodies and pools in creeks especially where nutrient levels are high which correlates with a trend in its spread through the One Mile Creek adjacent to storm water drains that run into the creek. It spreads by stem fragments.