Overview

Several species and subspecies of non-native water primrose (or Ludwigia) are known to grow in the Lower Willamette Valley. Differentiation is complicated, but, in general, non-native water primroses are known for filling in slow-moving waters and surrounding riparian zones. Mostly known in central California, sporadic patches of both are reported in the Willamette River and its tributaries. Non-native water primroses send large numbers of roots deep into soil next to bodies of water.

Once established, water primrose grows floating strands, which can stretch as long as 20 feet onto the water’s surface, slowing water and clogging canals. Water primrose creates substantial masses of persistent roots, from which new plants develop. Broken pieces of stem and leaf are also known to create new plants. Colonization by seed is thought to be relatively less common.

How to Identify

As noted above, water primrose species are difficult to tell apart, and sometimes can only be differentiated in the laboratory. Both have yellow flowers up to 1” in diameter. In the 4-County CWMA area, L. hexapetala and L. peploides are both likely to be found.

Stems often take on a reddish tinge, especially in late summer. Leaves are oblong and waxy, with pronounced veins and smooth edges. Most structures are found above water, unlike many aquatic species.
Lookalikes

*L. hexapetala* and *L. peploides* bear a strong resemblance to each other. Both are species of concern.

Control Methods

Attempting to control water primrose without the aid of a licensed herbicide applicator is not recommended. Please contact the 4-County CWMA at info@4countycwma.org to get a control referral for this species.

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SUBMIT YOUR REPORT TODAY!

Water primrose is a top priority species within the 4-County CWMA boundary. Please report all sightings to the Oregon Invasives Hotline at www.oregoninvasiveshotline.org.

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The mission of the 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area, comprising Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties, is to create and support collaborative weed management in the greater Portland area. For more details on our collaborative efforts in management, mapping, and outreach, please visit our website:

www.4countycwma.org