



Whatcom Weeds

Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board 901 W. Smith Road Bellingham WA 98226
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YELLOW FLOATING HEART

Nymphoides peltata

THREAT: Yellow floating heart is an aquatic plant, native to Eurasia and the Mediterranean area, which was introduced to the United States as an ornamental plant by the late 1880s. In Washington State, the main population of this plant is in the Spokane River, although three other populations were discovered in Whatcom County in 2003-04. One additional infestation was found in Yakima County in 2006. These plants may have hitchhiked on waterlily plantings or planted intentionally. This floating-leafed plant can form dense mats, which interfere with recreation, water movement, and native plants and animals. The mats of plants can cause a reduction in the oxygen content in the water, affecting fish. Yellow floating heart reproduces by stolens and by seed, which are dispersed by water. Large plant fragments may also produce new plants. This plant grows in still and slow moving fresh water.



DESCRIPTION: Yellow floating heart is an aquatic perennial. It has waterlily-like floating leaves attached to a long stem rooted in the substrate. The heart-shaped leaves are green with purplish undersides and are wavy along the edges. The showy yellow flowers have five petals and are about an inch in diameter. The petals are arranged like spokes on a wheel and are fringed along the margins. The flowers are borne on an upright stalk, a few inches above the water, with two to five flowers on each stalk. The similar aquatic plant called spatterdock (also called yellow pond or cow lily) has yellow, ball-shaped flowers and leaves in the shape of elephant ears.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS: Like all aquatic weeds, control is difficult and eradication may be unrealistic. The best control is to prevent the introduction of any non-native aquatic plants from water bodies. Yellow floating heart is very difficult to control through mechanical and chemical means once it has been established. Bottom barriers can be used in small areas, to prevent aquatic plant growth. If plants are harvested or cut, all plant pieces should be removed from the water. It is not known if grass carp will eat yellow floating heart.

