

Water Lettuce

(*Pistia stratiotes*)



Habitat: Aquatic, freshwater
Family name: Araceae
Common name/s: Floating Lettuce, Water Cabbage, Jalkumbhi



Large Water Lettuce Stand

Description:

The area of origin of Water Lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*), is still speculative, being most probably South America.



This perennial freshwater hydrophyte is a herbaceous floating plant belonging to the family *Araceae*.

The plant consists of a rosette of pale green leaves, prominently veined and it resembles a small lettuce plant.

Water Lettuce has thick, soft, velvety-hairy, erect leaf blades and very short or no stem. Leaves grow in a rosette formation.

Flowers are bisexual and appear in the centre of leaf rosettes.



Water Lettuce Flower

Leaf hairs are water repellent and trap air, preventing the plant from being submerged.

thick, soft leaves that form a rosette. It floats on the surface of the water, its roots hanging submerged beneath floating leaves. The leaves can be up to 14 cm long.



Water Lettuce Leaf

Long feathery roots suspended in water.



Plants can spread rapidly by means of stolons (*runners which connect mother and daughter plants*) forming dense mats.

Seeds are easily carried by water for long distances, since they float during the first two days after they reach maturity.



Water Lettuce Pollen



Water Lettuce Seeds

5mm