

Water Lettuce

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Water Lettuce Latest News

El Salvador's Lake Suchitlan is overwhelmed by invasive water lettuce which is impacting thousands of families dependent on fishing and tourism.

About Water Lettuce

- Water lettuce is a **free-floating aquatic weed** found in **tropical countries** worldwide, including **Asia, Africa and equatorial America**.
- It is also known as **water cabbage, Nile cabbage, or shellflower**.
- **Appearance:** It is a floating aquatic herb that **resembles a floating head of lettuce**. It has white to tan, long and feathery roots that hang beneath the rosette of leaves.
- It grows **best on still or slow moving bodies** of fresh water such as farm dams, reservoirs, lakes, rivers and creeks.

Why is it an Invasive Species?

- It **forms dense mats** that clog waterways making boating, fishing, and other water activities impossible.
- These mats also degrade water **quality by blocking the air-water interface** and greatly reducing oxygen levels which can result in fish die-off and the overall **reduction of aquatic fauna and flora diversity**.
- **Impact on Environment:** It affects water flow, damages native ecosystems.

Source: Reuters

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/water-lettuce/>

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