



PO Box 37263
Stokes Valley
LOWER HUTT 6340

Telephone: (04) 934 0559
Fax: (04) 934 0557
Mobile: (027) 222 2100
Email: info@kiwiherbs.com
Website: www.kiwiherbs.com

New Zealand Aquatic Plants



The most popular native plants with the aquarium enthusiasts were *Limosella lineata*, a native turf plant, and *Myriophyllum robustum*, a threatened native milfoil. (Credit: NIWA)

Unlike New Zealand's terrestrial flora, 66% of our indigenous freshwater flora are common with Australia (Champion and Clayton 2000). In a similar way Chatham (Rekohu) Island has a subset of the New Zealand freshwater flora, with 32% of New Zealand macrophytes present (Champion and Clayton 2004). These natural introductions are presumably the result of seed transfer by migratory waterfowl or wind dispersal.



[Potamogeton suboblongus](#) (mud pondweed, left) and [Myriophyllum propinquum](#) (common water milfoil, right). Photos by Jeremy Rolfe.

There is a diverse range of taxonomic groups comprising aquatic plants including;

- charophytes (specialised algae resembling higher plants with 1 family, 4 genera, 18 species),
- fern allies (1 family, 1 genus, 2 species),
- ferns (2 families, 3 genera, 4 species),
- proto angiosperms (3 families, 4 genera, 5 species),
- monocotyledons (14 families, 24 genera, 35 species) and
- dicotyledons (15 families, 26 genera, 53 species).

Thus a wide range of taxonomically unrelated species have colonised aquatic habitats, often with only one or a few species representing an individual family which has a much greater number of terrestrial representatives.

The largest genera are

- *Nitella* (11 indigenous, including at least 3 endemic species),
- *Myriophyllum* (6 indigenous including 3 endemic, 1 alien species),
- *Potamogeton* (4 indigenous including 2 endemic, 2 alien species)
- *Chara* (4 indigenous including 1 probable endemic, 1 alien species), and
- *Ranunculus* (4 indigenous including 2 endemic, 1 alien species).

