

Aquatic Weed Fact Sheet
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Feathered Water Fern

Federal Noxious Weed

Azolla pinnata

This small, free-floating aquatic fern was found in an aquarium/water garden shop in Raleigh, North Carolina, in the fall of 1999. *Azolla pinnata* is a triangular shaped plant, 3 cm across the base and 6 to 8 cm long. In greenhouse grown plants, the plant is pale green with a brown base area. Field or nursery grown plants may have different coloration.



Azolla pinnata may be confused with another native fern, mosquito fern, (*Azolla caroliniana*). This fern is commonly found in North Carolina and often has a reddish appearance. (Shown on left)



Azolla pinnata, is prohibited in the United States by Federal law, and may spread to water bodies across the Southeastern United States. *Azolla pinnata* can spread rapidly, and it has the ability to survive on moist soil in and around rivers, ditches, and ponds. This may allow the plant to survive drawdowns and periods of drought. It forms dense surface mats, which interfere with boating, fishing and recreational activities as well as degrade water quality by reducing oxygen levels.

For additional information visit our web site at:
<http://www.cropsci.ncsu.edu/aquaticweeds>