

# AZOLLA

*Azolla filiculoides*

## What is Azolla?

Azolla is a native freshwater aquatic fern that is naturally found in billabongs and slow moving water.

It can appear in waterways temporarily during the warmer months from spores or plant fragments transported by water, animals, boats, vehicles and human activities. It is typically found in waterways that have high nutrient levels and water temperatures.

When these conditions are right this plant can be fast spreading, forming carpets that cover the surface of the water.

## Benefits

Azolla has many benefits for the aquatic environment

- It is a food source for many aquatic animals including water birds, fish, snails, shrimp and insects
- Provides shelter and protection for the small aquatic animals and insects
- Can act as a biological control for mosquitos. The dense mats cover the surface of the water which stop the mosquito larvae coming to the surface for air.
- Creating dense mats on the surface Azolla inhibits Blue-green Algae blooms by limiting the amount of sunlight reaching the water and also uses up the nutrients that the Algae needs.

## Does Council Control Azolla?

As this is a native plant that provides many benefits to the ecosystem and does not pose any risk to human health Council does not control or remove Azolla from waterways. Intervention only takes place if it is seen to be having a significant negative impact on the environment due to excessive growth. These negative impacts may include: reducing oxygen levels in the water that will affect fish and other aquatic organisms; crowding out and reducing other aquatic plants.

## Keeping our waterways healthy. How you can help.

You can help keep our waterways healthy by following these simple guidelines:

- Do not feed human food to native wildlife.
- Animal droppings should be picked up and placed in a bin.
- Do not wash vehicles in the driveway or street to stop detergents being washed into our stormwater system.
- Dispose all garden and green waste in the Council supplied green waste bins.

For further information, please contact Council on 8571 1702

## AZOLLA PROFILE

**OTHER NAMES:** Red Azolla or Pacific Azolla

**STATUS:** Native

**SIZE:** Prostrate-15mm x 10-30mm

**DESCRIPTION:** Green to deep red, free-floating fern with a crinkled appearance. Long unbranched roots hang down below the surface of the water.

**SIMILAR PLANTS:** *Azolla pinnata* (Native), Duckweed *Lemna disperma* (Native), *Salvinia Salvinia molesta* (Weed).

