

## Invasive Giant Salvinia Identified in Lake Wateree

### SCDES Seeks Public Help in Reporting of Invasive Plant in Lake Wateree

The S.C. Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) seeks the public's assistance in reporting sightings of the invasive giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) plant that's been identified in Lake Wateree, S.C. Giant salvinia is destructive on aquatic ecosystems, interferes with boating and recreation, and is prohibited in the United States by federal law.

Giant salvinia is an invasive floating fern originating from Brazil. South Carolina waterways, especially in the coastal plain, are very susceptible to invasion by this plant. It can double its coverage in less than a week, forming dense mats that outgrow and replace the native plants that provide food and habitat for animals and waterfowl. Giant salvinia mats can create navigation issues and cause problems with water quality, as well.

SCDES first identified the presence of giant salvinia in Lake Wateree on Oct. 6, 2025. **Anyone who believes they've located the plant should contact SCDES's Aquatic Nuisance Plants Program:**

- Email: [invasiveweeds@des.sc.gov](mailto:invasiveweeds@des.sc.gov) | Phone: 803-898-0033
- Or [click here](#) to submit an online sighting report



*Left: Giant salvinia, the small floating plants, is pictured mixed with cutgrass. (Courtesy of Duke Energy.) Right: A mature giant salvinia plant with a salvinia weevil is pictured. (Courtesy of Santee Cooper.)*

SCDES's Aquatic Nuisance Plant Program is working closely with Duke Energy, which manages the lake, to eradicate this invasive plant from Lake Wateree as quickly as possible. As of Oct. 21, approximately 11 acres of giant salvinia have been identified in and around the cove on the north side of Lake Wateree State Park.

For additional information about SCDES's role with protecting South Carolina from invasive plant species, visit [des.sc.gov/anp](https://des.sc.gov/anp). Follow SCDES on social media for the latest updates: @SouthCarolinaDES