

Invasive pest species in the lower Waikato catchment

There are a number of introduced pest species that you may encounter while hunting koi carp (which of course is also an introduced pest). This article gives a brief introduction of each along with a link for further information. It also provides important information on how to CHECK, CLEAN, DRY your boat and gear to stop the spread of these pests.

- Alligator weed: This plant is widespread in Lake Whangape as well as other lakes and streams in the lower Waikato. It is fast growing and easily spread and is able to grow on both land and on water and can propagate from a just small stem fragment. This means that if you carry any part of it home on your boat or trailer it can infest your lawn. Further information: [Alligator weed | Waikato Regional Council](#)
- Golden dodder: This is a parasitic plant that sucks the nutrients out of host plants. It is toxic to stock and it can smother wetland plants. It is found mainly in the Whangamarino Wetland and in Lake Whangape. Further information: [Golden dodder: Pests and threats \(doc.govt.nz\)](#)
- Hornwort: This plant smothers and outcompetes native plant communities. It does not have roots and can readily create rafts of growth that spread through water bodies with ease. It is common in the North Island but not present in the South Island. See this link: [Hornwort: Weeds that pose serious threats to New Zealand \(doc.govt.nz\)](#)
- Freshwater gold clam: This is the latest nasty to appear in our waters and is very easily spread. It was first identified in Lake Karapiro in 2023 and has subsequently been found in the lower Waikato River. Freshwater gold clams are prolific breeders, able to produce 400 juveniles a day and up to 70,000 juveniles a year. Because they reproduce so rapidly they can clog water-based infrastructure, such as electricity generation plants, irrigation systems, and water treatment plants. Further information: [Freshwater gold clam \(Corbicula fluminea\) | NZ Government \(mpi.govt.nz\)](#)
- CHECK, CLEAN, DRY: Because of the threat caused by these pests there is now a requirement to clean all your gear that has been wet using the ‘Check, Clean, Dry’ procedure before moving to another waterway. This involves **checking** all your gear, including boat, trailer, boots and arrows for any plant material and leaving it at the site, **cleaning** any absorbent surfaces (such as carpets) with bleach, and then making sure all gear is completely **dry** to touch, then leaving it dry for at least another 48 hours before entering a different waterway. For full details see this link: [Exotic freshwater clams \(Corbicula\) | NZ Government \(mpi.govt.nz\)](#)