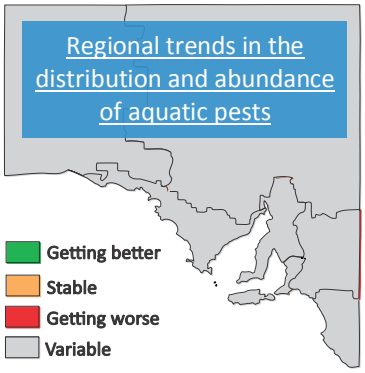
2013 State Report Card

What are the distribution and abundance of aquatic pests?

Marine and freshwater pests, including algae and animals, can compete with native species and cause damage to ecosystems. They can also damage infrastructure that supports our water supplies, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, maritime industries, and important cultural and recreational areas.

Aquatic pests arrive on boat hulls and in ballast water and through the aquarium trade.

The distribution and abundance of some freshwater plants, such as alligator weed, are shown in a separate report card - What are the distribution and abundance of weeds?



State target

Limit the establishment of pests and diseases and reduce the impact of existing pests.

Trend (2008–12)	Variable	The trend for aquatic pests varies: 2 species are increasing, 2 are decreasing, 1 is stable

Some aquatic pests are increasing and some are decreasing.

Caulerpa taxifolia is an algae that can spread rapidly and exclude native species. Surveys in 2010 indicated it was declining. Increasing reports of European fanworm indicate that it is spreading, but the reports may be due to an increased awareness of the pest. The number and distribution of European carp are remaining steady.

No new marine pests have been recorded in recent years, but two significant new freshwater pests have been recorded.

In 2011, a freshwater fish called the oriental weatherloach was found in the South Australian stretch of the Murray–Darling Basin. Its population is thought to be increasing.

Another freshwater fish, the speckled livebearer, was detected in 2008 in Willunga Creek. The fish has been eradicated from that location but it has since been found at other sites.

Regional trends in the distribution and abundance of aquatic pests are variable or unknown.

↑ European fanworm, Oriental weatherloach

↔ European carp

↓ Caulerpa taxifolia, Speckled livebearer

Where we are at (2012)	Unknown	More information is needed on the distribution and abundance of pests in marine and freshwater environments

The distribution and abundance of pests in marine and freshwater environments are largely unknown.

Reliability of information	★☆☆☆☆	Poor. There are insufficient data on the abundance and trends of aquatic pests

Further information:
Technical information for this report card
Aquatic pests in South Australia

This report is a work in progress. As resource monitoring improves, so too will our ability to describe trends in condition.

Government of South Australia