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THE BLOOMING ORNAMENTAL AQUATIC PLANT INDUSTRY : A THREAT TO THE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS OF SRI LANKA ?

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Aquatic ecosystems of Sri Lanka are currently under threat and the spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) is one of the major concerns. In this context, ornamental aquatic plant industry is partly responsible for releasing exotics into the natural environment.

The unavailability of a comprehensive list of ornamental aquatic plants that are currently being used in the local and export market has curtailed conservation efforts of aquatic eco-systems. Further, this kind of information could also contribute to the development of this blooming industry. Currently, the state institutes depend on the information provided by the growers and this has led to several illegitimate names being incorporated into the existing ornamental aquatic plant lists. Hence, the information presented in this study and the compiled list of aquatic plants together with all the illegitimate names as well as the updated scientific names could be considered as a valuable attempt to fill this information gap. Hence, it is a timely requirement to dedicate a complete volume of the Sri Lanka Forester to make available the information compiled.

We trust this publication would serve as a valuable reference guide.

- Editorial Board