



LDWF Office of Fisheries

Louisiana's Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Report GSARP Spring 2024

(October 2023 – April 2024)

New Reported ANS:

There were no new species reported from the wild during this reporting period. LDWF Enforcement did confiscate a Black Piranha from an aquarium. EnforcementThe individual reported he caught it in a pond but refused to provide any further information.

Update to recently reported ANS:

Northern Snakehead:

A video of 2 snakeheads guarding a school of fry was sent to the LDWF ANS coordinator in June 2023. The video was reported to be from the MS River near Ferriday, LA. Numerous press releases and newspaper articles have asked the public for reports of snakeheads. At this time, there have been no more reports. LDWF will continue to monitor the MS River backwaters for snakeheads during regular sampling tasks.

Status of established ANS

Apple Snail:

Public reports for Apple Snails have slowed due to the drought and high temperatures over the summer. This resulted in virtually no reports in roadside ditches and fewer reports even from bigger waterbodies. The recent warmer temperatures and rains have increased the number of Apple Snails being reported to LDWF. LDWF is working with Arkansas after a report of Apple snails being found in crawfish shipments. This effort is outreach to both fishermen and the general public.

Asian Swamp Eels:

Asian swamp eels (*Monopterus albus*) were found in Bayou St John, New Orleans in June 2019. LDWF and a local university professor continue to monitor and sample the population. LDWF electrofishing did not detect any swamp eels. It is believed that this is a population with very low numbers at this time. There have been no reports of swamp eels in 2023. LDWF will continue to electro-fish in the area. There is a shoreline vegetation restoration project near the site where the swamp eels were found. They will be looking for swamp eels during their activities.

Invasive Carp:

Nothing new to report on invasive carp since the last update.

Aquatic Plant Control Program:

LDWF continued with our control of invasive aquatic weeds using various techniques. Aquatic plant control plans were developed for 53 different waterbodies during the reporting period. A total of 35,463 acres of nuisance vegetation were treated in 2023. Water Hyacinth proved to be the most problematic invasive plant in Louisiana, with herbicides being applied to over 15,716 acres during that time. Additionally, 14,592 acres of Giant Salvinia and 1,477 acres of Alligator weed were treated across the state during the reporting period. LDWF uses an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to control aquatic plants consisting of chemical, physical (booms and drawdowns), and biological (insects and grass carp) methods to achieve a greater combined benefit. In 2023, LDWF had an Aquatic Plant Control Program budget of approximately \$6,400,000, of which a large portion was spent on the monitoring, treatment, and research of Giant Salvinia.