

PEST ALERT

Cattails

Typha latifolia

What are cattails?

Cattail is an invasive wetland rush with thick spongy linear leaves, and an underground stem arising from thick creeping rhizome mats. Cattails produce a brown, cigar shaped inflorescence, and spreads via wind-blown seeds and vegetative runners.

The Problem: If left unchecked, cattail can form dense, monotypic stands, effectively eliminating all open water in shallow water habitats, areas vital to species such as endangered Hawaiian stilts. Cattail also impedes the work of taro farmers, invading lo'i and making it difficult to plant taro without a great deal of cattail control.

Cattail control options:

Hand pulling: Pull new shoots out by hand, as soon as they have emerged and are large enough to grip. Be sure to remove all of the root, or as much as possible.

Cutting: Continuously cut off new green shoots as they emerge from the water using hand clippers or a weedwacker. This prevents leaves from reaching maturity at which point they produce and transport large amounts of food to the root system. A root system deprived of its food supply will eventually die.

Herbicide treatment: Cattails can be treated with a foliar application of a glyphosate based herbicide that is approved for aquatic use, following label instructions. This herbicide is translocated down to the rhizome mats and kills them. Care must be taken to avoid drift of spray onto non-target plants.



KISC

KAUAI INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

For more information, or to report sightings of cattails call 246-0684