

## Can I collect and grow aquatic plants in my classroom?

The answer is **YES**, but these activities are regulated by the state and require a few permits (described below). Be sure to apply for permits well in advance as it may take two to twelve weeks to receive them, depending on the backlog of requests received by the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS). **Note: Permits are required for science fair projects involving plants.**



The Division of Plant Industry of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is the regulatory agency that works to detect, intercept and control plant and honey bee pests that threaten Florida's native and commercially grown plants and agricultural resources. All of the forms needed to collect and grow aquatic plants can be found on the website below:

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Business-Services/Plant-Pest-Permits>

- To collect **non-prohibited** aquatic plants from the wild, you need to apply for an **Application for Permit to Collect Non-Prohibited Aquatic Plants**. The appropriate form is FDACS-08450 and can be found on the website above.
- To collect **prohibited** aquatic plants, you need to fill out the **Application and Permit to Move Organisms Regulated by the State of Florida**. This form is also on the website above.

*A friendly reminder: Always ask permission to collect plants from private property.*

**IMPORTANT:** Always dispose of non-native plants—and all of their parts—including seeds, stems, flowers, etc. in a responsible manner: double bagged in a sealed in a garbage bag and placed in the household garbage. If collecting native plants, be sure they are obtained with permission from the land owner. If you have questions, contact the DPI (352) 395-4700. Ask for the Plant Inspection Bureau.



**ANOTHER OPTION:** The UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants has put together a Freshwater Artificial Plant Kit. This kit includes ten life-like artificial plants that are both native and non-native. Teachers may borrow this kit for up to 2 weeks to use in their classroom. This is a good way to familiarize students with some of the common aquatic species, look at plant structures and compare and contrast characteristics among plants. To obtain a loaner kit or information on how to assemble one yourself contact us at [caip-education@ufl.edu](mailto:caip-education@ufl.edu) or call 352.392.1799.



Florida Invasive Plant Education Initiative • <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/education>  
A Collaboration of the UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants  
and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission / Invasive Plant Management Section