Primrose willow  
*Ludwigia peruviana*

**WHAT IS IT?**
- A perennial wetland shrub that can form floating islands of vegetation
- Originates from South America and the Caribbean
- Not known to exist in South Australia, but has the potential to become a serious pest if introduced for aquariums or outdoor ponds
- Also known as: Peruvian primrose, Peruvian primrose-willow, Peruvian primrose bush, primrose willow, and water primrose.
- Synonyms: *Jussiaea peruviana*, *Jussiaea grandiflora*
- Similar species: *Ludwigia longifolia* (already established in horticulture)

**WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?**
- Forms dense stands that displace native plants and wildlife habitat
- Infestations reduce light levels, increase the accumulation of organic material and increase sedimentation
- Can obstruct watercourse flow, interfering with recreational activities, navigation and irrigation
- Dense stands can reduce access to drinking water for native animals and livestock

What are State Alert Weeds?  
These are invasive weeds that are not known to be in South Australia, or if present, occur in low numbers in a restricted area, and are still capable of being eradicated. An Alert Weed would pose a serious threat to the State’s primary industries, natural environments or human health if it became established here. All Alert Weeds are declared under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*: their transport and sale are prohibited (Sect. 175 and 177), plants must be destroyed (Sect. 182), and if found on your land their presence must be notified to NRM authorities (Sect. 180) – refer overleaf.
DESCRIPTION
A large perennial shrub 2-4 m tall, which is deciduous in cooler climates, and sometimes floats freely on the water surface. The plant bears bright yellow flowers with 4-5 petals, and reddish-brown capsules containing large numbers (1,000-3,000) of light brown round seeds. It has a strong woody taproot with many lateral roots.

HOW IT SPREADS
Primrose willow reproduces by seeds, which are dispersed mainly by water and birds, but are also windborne, or transported by machinery. The plant also spreads vegetatively by suckers from submerged stems and fragments. Dispersal can occur by machinery or water flow.

HABITAT
It thrives in saturated soils or free water, usually forming a dense monoculture in wetlands, swamps, drying mud, shallow slowly-flowing waterways, marshy areas, riparian vegetation, and creek banks.

ORIGIN
Primrose willow is native to Mexico, Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), the Caribbean and South America (Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay).

DISTRIBUTION IN AUSTRALIA
Current: Locally naturalised in the swampy lake margins in and around Sydney, and coastal districts of central New South Wales. Not yet naturalised in South Australia.

Potential: In South Australia, primrose willow is a potential weed along the River Murray wetlands, and streams in the highest rainfall parts of the State.

HOW IT GOT HERE
Introduced into Australia as a garden pond ornamental, establishing in the Botany Wetlands, NSW, and spreading north and south of Sydney. It does not appear to have naturalised anywhere else.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?
Be on the alert for this plant using this Fact Sheet as a guide. If you see a suspicious plant that may be this State Alert Weed, please report it to your local Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board (contact details at www.nrm.sa.gov.au). For more information on weeds, including Alerts, contact your local NRM Board or visit either www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity (phone 08 8303 9620) or www.weeds.org.au.