

Hydrilla Growth and Sterile Grass Carp Impact

Hydrilla will die out in the winter, at least the parts that are observed. The roots and seeds will remain and will begin to start growing again the next summer. Hydrilla growth is typically later than most other local types of aquatic vegetation which is why most complaints do not arise until mid to late summer. Typically grass carp will begin foraging and controlling hydrilla when it is in the early stages which keeps it from reaching full size as seen in late summer without control from grass carp or herbicides. If the grass carp have not controlled the vegetation early in the growing season, they are not likely to make much of an observable difference in late summer.

Stocking grass carp earlier than March does not help as they will not begin feeding until the water warms up in the spring, so stocking in the fall will not increase control and likely reduce effectiveness since some will be lost to mortality during the winter. How effective grass carp are has many variables which are difficult to calculate, but stocking earlier does not improve the chances of control. The last SML stocking in March 2013, eliminated all the known hydrilla growth the same year. They can make an impact soon after stocking in the spring.