

Elodea

Genus: *Egeria* or *Elodea*
Family: Hydrocharitaceae
Order: Hydrocharitales
Class: Liliopsida
Phylum: Magnoliophyta
Kingdom: Plantae



Conditions for Customer Ownership

We hold permits allowing us to transport these organisms. To access permit conditions, [click here](#).

Never purchase living specimens without having a disposition strategy in place.

The USDA does not require any special permits to ship and/or receive *Elodea* except in Puerto Rico, where shipment of aquatic plants is prohibited. However, in order to continue to protect our environment, you must house your *Elodea* in an aquarium. Under no circumstances should you release your *Elodea* into the wild.

Primary Hazard Considerations

Always wash your hands thoroughly before and after you handle your *Elodea*, or anything it has touched.

Availability

Elodea is available year round. *Elodea* should arrive with a green color, it should not be yellow or “slimy.”

- *Elodea canadensis*—Usually bright green with three leaves that form whorls around the stem. The whorls compact as they get closer to the tip. Found completely submerged. Is generally a thinner species of *Elodea*. Has a degree of seasonality May–June.
- *Egeria densa*—Usually bright green with small strap-shaped leaves with fine saw teeth. 3–6 leaves form whorls around the stem and compact as they get closer to the tip. Usually can grow to be a foot or two long. Is thicker and bushier than *E. canadensis*.

Elodea arrives in a sealed plastic bag. Upon arrival, this should be opened and *Elodea* should be kept moist, or it should be placed in a habitat. For short term storage (1–2 weeks), *Elodea* should be placed in its bag into the refrigerator (4 °C). Regardless of its housing, do not allow your *Elodea* to dry out.

Captive Care

Habitat:

- When you receive your *Elodea*, remove it from the packaging and gently rinse away any debris or broken off pieces.
- Your *Elodea* is a freshwater organism that should be kept in de-chlorinated water. Water from the tap in most homes contains chlorine which can be detrimental to the health of your aquatic plant. *Elodea* should be fully submerged in de-chlorinated water. De-chlorinate your water by using a commercial chemical designed to do so (such as [Stress Coat](#)), or by leaving your water out in an open container for 24–48 hours.
- *Elodea* has a relatively undemanding light requirements, 10–12 hours a day. *Elodea* is typically kept at temperatures ranging between 50°F–77°F.

- *Elodea* is an aquatic plant; submerge it into an established or de-chlorinated aquatic environment. It can grow unrooted (free floating), however, it will grow more vigorously if rooted in a substrate.

Care:

- Food: There is no need to feed; *Elodea* derives most of its nourishment from the water through its leaves and through light.
- Water: You should keep your *Elodea* fully submerged in water, so water in its habitat should be replenished as it evaporates with de-chlorinated water.

To Root *Elodea*:

- Place 2–3 inches of gravel on the bottom of the tank.
- Work the plants down into the gravel.
- Keep the plants secured in place by using small weights (they can be purchased at local pet stores) or stones or other heavy inert material until they can be secured with their own roots.
- The habitat should be cleaned once a month to ensure addition of fresh water into the habitat, and removal of any waste material that has fallen off the plant.

Information

- Method of Reproduction: *Elodea* does not reproduce sexually (there are no flowers or seeds); instead, there are specialized nodal regions described as double nodes that occur at intervals along the sprig. Double nodes produce lateral buds, branches, and sprout roots. Only those shoot fragments can develop into new plants.

Wild Habitat

Elodea is a submerged, freshwater perennial, generally rooted on the bottom in depths of up to 20 feet or drifting. It is found in both still and flowing waters, in lakes, ponds, pools, ditches, and quiet streams.

Aquarium Hobbyist Use

Elodea works well in many fish tanks. *Elodea* acts to increase the levels of oxygen in the water. It can also be a food source for different fish and aquatic snails. The leaves also absorb nutrients from the water that are normally considered a nuisance to other organisms in an aquarium (such as nitrogen).

Disposition

Do one of the following:

- Place *Elodea* in a freezer for 48 hours.
- Allow *Elodea* to “dry out” for 72 hours.
- Incinerate *Elodea*.