

**W.10 STAR BLADDERWORT/STERBLASIEKRUID***(Utricularia stellaris* L.f.)*(= U. inflexa* Forssk. var. *stellaris* (L.f.) P. Taylor)**Family: Lentibulariaceae****(Compiled by the Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria)**

Bladderwort is a submerged, free-floating herb. Its leaves are divided into numerous fine, thread-like segments with small rounded bladders which can trap tiny animals. The inflorescence consists of 2 to 16 yellow to whitish flowers, often with purple markings, and is held erect and above water by 5 to 7 bladder-like floats arranged in a star-like manner. The flowers are two-lipped, the lower lip having a short sac at the base. Bladderwort reproduces by small seeds produced in round fruit capsules, and by fragmentation.

**Related species**

Bladderwort is the only Southern African species of *Utricularia* with a whorl of 5 to 7 strongly inflated floats (only 2 to 4 times as long as thick) which are borne above the base of the axis of the inflorescence.

**Distribution**

The plant is widely distributed in the moister regions of Southern Africa from the Eastern Cape northwards through Natal into South West Africa/Namibia, Botswana and Transvaal. It also grows in Angola, Zaire, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

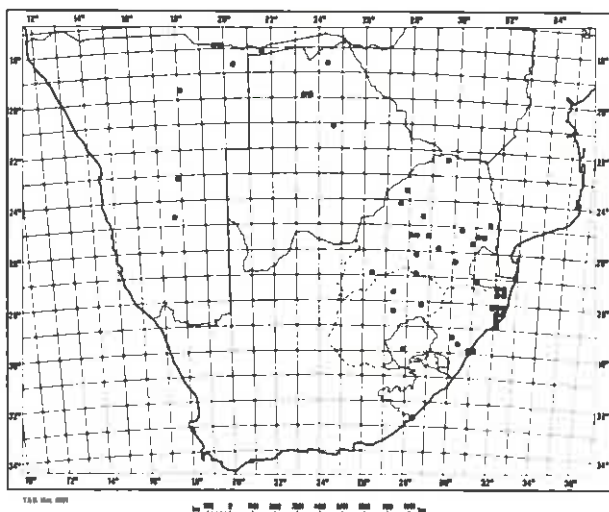
**Ecology**

Bladderwort is found in still to slow-flowing water, in vleis, pans, dams, rivers and seasonally inundated areas. It often grows together with other waterplants such as *Lagarosiphon* (oxygen weed), *Nymphaea* (water lily) and *Najas* (saw-weed).

**Importance**

The species may grow in fairly dense masses which may interfere with boating and fishing.





#### Legislation

There is no legislation for the control of bladderwort.

#### Notes

The scientific name is derived from *utriculus* = bladder, and *stellaris* = star-like, which refers to the arrangement of the floats.

**Species Number: 7901.000-01550**

#### Literature

- TAYLOR, P., 1964. The genus *Utricularia* L. (Lentibulariaceae) in Africa (south of the Sahara) and Madagascar. *Kew Bull.* 18: 1-245.
- TAYLOR, P., 1973. Lentibulariaceae. *Flora of Tropical East Africa.*