

# WATER WILLOW



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(*Justicia americana*) is a native emergent aquatic plant and one of the most common on the Coosa River. It can grow partially submerged along the bank and growth can extend out to water depths of 5 feet or more depending on water clarity. The stems are angular and light green. The leaves grow on the opposite sides of the stem and the small flowers range in color from white to pale lavender. It produces a creeping root, or rhizome, that spreads along the lake bottom. The roots and stems provide important spawning sites for many fish and habitat for invertebrates. Water willow is a very hardy species that can withstand reservoir drawdowns and overwintering.



## WATER WILLOW RELOCATION PROGRAM

In an effort to increase native aquatic vegetation, Alabama Power initiated its water willow relocation program in 2015. Employees take water willow from areas of high density and relocate these plants to areas with no vegetation. We then anchor these relocated plants to the reservoir bottom with small-gauge wire and cinderblocks. Based on our success last year, Alabama Power plans on expanding our relocation program. We hope to include stakeholder groups and fishing teams to assist with relocation efforts.

\*\*Stewardship credits will be available to fishing teams

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