

Agapanthus praecox subsp. orientalis

COMMON NAMES

agapanthus, lily of the Nile

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust, clump-forming perennial. Rhizomes thick, long, white. Leaves 20-70 x 2-6 cm, leathery, arching, arising from base in clumps up to 20, sap watery. Flowers small, purplish-blue or white, in many-flowered umbrella-shaped clusters 7 x 5 cm, Dec-Feb. Seeds thin, papery, black.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily identified by the fleshy, strap-like green leaf and large blue or white flowers.

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

GENUS

Agapanthus

FAMILY

Alliaceae

AUTHORITY

Agapanthus praecox subsp. *orientalis* (F.M.Leight.) F.M.Leight.

FLOWERING

December, January, February

YEAR NATURALISED

1952

ORIGIN

South Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The plant can survive mowing, grazing, insects and sprays.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial.



Agapanthus praecox. Photographer: Richard Hursthouse, Licence: CC BY.



Agapanthus praecox. Photographer: Richard Hursthouse, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

agapanthus: From the Greek agape, meaning 'love', and anthos, meaning 'flower', translating broadly as the flower of love.

orientalis: From the Latin orientale, meaning 'eastern' but sometimes also translated as 'from the Orient'.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

AGAPSO

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/agapanthus-praecox-subsp-orientalis/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026