

Alocasia brisbanensis

COMMON NAMES

elephant's ears, aroid lily

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A large perennial with stems growing along the soil surface over 50cm long; dense stands 1-2m tall are formed; mature plants have 4-5 arrow-shaped leaves 75x50 cm; numerous small, creamy, fragrant, flowers crowd a stalk which is surrounded by a pale green sheath; fruit (1cm diameter) are red and fleshy and clustered on the flower stalk (West, 1996).

SIMILAR TAXA

Often confused with taro, *Colocasia esculenta*. *Alocasia* is easily separated as the petiole attaches to the base of the leaf, the petiole attaches to the under surface of the leaf in *Colocasia esculenta*.

HABITAT

Wetlands, streamsides, river systems, heavily disturbed shrubland and forest, damp frost-free open areas, regenerating ex-pasture.

GENUS

Alocasia

FAMILY

Araceae

AUTHORITY

Alocasia brisbanensis (F.M.Bailey) Domin

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January, February, March, April

FRUITING

Sept

YEAR NATURALISED

1867

ORIGIN

Celon? or Tahiti? Native in E. Australia, Tropical Asia



Robinson Crusoe Island, Chile. Photographer: John Sawyer, Date taken: 01/05/2010, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Hutt River Trail near Belmont, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 27/03/2011, Licence: CC BY.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. The leaves die back during spring and during this phase the stalks contain viscous fluid (West, 1996). Seed is produced and vegetative reproduction will occur from fragments. Dispersed by birds (West, 1996).

POISONOUS PLANT

Toxins in the tubers and rhizomes but can be removed through cooking.

ETYMOLOGY

alocasia: From the Greek a- 'without' or 'lacking' and locasia 'lotus root', refers to its similarity to Colocasia.

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

ALOBRI

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/alocasia-brisbanensis/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026