

# Arum italicum

## COMMON NAMES

Italian arum

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tuberous, clump-forming perennial 25-60 cm tall. Main tuber 4 cm diameter, many small tubers attached. Leaves up to 30 cm long, arrow shaped (young leaves thinner), glossy, dark-green with creamy midrib and main veins, purple-tinged, present from Autumn to Spring. Flower a yellow spike, surrounded by a 30 x 15 cm, pale green translucent bract. Berries 1 cm, orange or red, on flower stalk after leaves die back.

## SIMILAR TAXA

May be confused with *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, or other lilly species (*Calla*, *Dracunculus*) but the dark green leaves with creamy mid-rib and veins are very distinctive.

## HABITAT

Heavily disturbed shrubland and forest, herbfield, damp areas with low cover, regenerating ex-pasture.

## GENUS

Arum

## FAMILY

Araceae

## AUTHORITY

*Arum italicum* Mill.

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

October, November

## FRUITING

November, December

## YEAR NATURALISED

1945

## ORIGIN

Eurasia



Wanganui. Oct 2007. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Arum italicum plant. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## TOLERANCES

Drought resistant once established.

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Spreads via seed and slow vegetative spread. Probably bird dispersed.

## POISONOUS PLANT

All parts of the plant are poisonous including the bright orange berries.

## ETYMOLOGY

**arum:** From the Greek word aron which means 'climbing' or 'poisonous plant'.

## 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

ARUITA

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/arum-italicum/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026