

Canna indica

COMMON NAMES

Indian shot

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect, leafy perennial herb to 1-2 m tall. Roots rhizomatous. Stem sturdy, unbranched, hairless. Leaves on the stem, to 45 x 15 cm, oblong, with prominent midrib, sheath below. Flowers often paired, 5-6 cm long, pinkish-red and reddish-yellow, with red spots. Seed capsule round, to 2 cm, with black seeds.

SIMILAR TAXA

Hybrid cannas (*Canna x generalis*) have a range of forms. a. Foliage green with large yellow flowers. b. Foliage green with large showy red flowers. c. Foliage purplish with large orange flowers. *Hedychium* sp. (ginger) are also similar lack the strongly ribbed leaves and have multiple flowers in each inflorescence.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Damp spots, wetlands, low-growing habitats, disturbed shrubland, streamsides, riversystems.

GENUS

Canna

FAMILY

Cannaceae

AUTHORITY

Canna indica L.

FLOWERING

November, December, February, March, April

FRUITING

January, March, April, May

YEAR NATURALISED

1870

ORIGIN

West Indies, Central and South America.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental.

TOLERANCES

Tolerates hot to moderate temperature, damage and grazing, wind, salt, damp to mod dry. Intolerant of shade, heavy frost.



LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Usually spreads vegetatively rather than by seed; seeds globose, black (Ewan Cameron 1996). Spread by dumped vegetation, soil movement, occasionally water movement.

ETYMOLOGY

canna: Term is derived from a Greek name for a type of reed.

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

CANIND

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Gardner, R. 1990. Canna. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 45: 1-4.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/canna-indica/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026