

Sagittaria sagittifolia

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

A tall marginal aquatic plant, with arrow-shaped leaves and submerged strap like leaves.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tall summer-green perennial dying back to underground parts over winter. Emergent leaves have a distinctive glossy arrow-shape 3 -16 cm x 0.3-7 cm with long basal lobes 2-30 cm long. Petioles are triangular in cross-section. Plants can also produce ovoid floating leaves and strap-like submerged leaves. Rhizomatous with round tubers, up to 3 cm across, produced on these. No flowers seen on New Zealand material.

SIMILAR TAXA

Other *Sagittaria* species. *Sagittaria montevidensis* also has arrow-shaped leaves but petioles are D-shaped in cross-section and it does not produce creeping rhizomes or tubers. The two other *Sagittaria* species present in New Zealand (*S. subulata* and *S. platyphylla*) do not have arrow-shaped emergent leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Only field site from Coromandel Peninsula, Waikato, cultivated elsewhere.

HABITAT

Still and slow flowing water bodies.

GENUS

Sagittaria

FAMILY

Alismataceae

AUTHORITY

Sagittaria sagittifolia L.

FLOWERING

No flowering plants seen in New Zealand

YEAR NATURALISED

2002

ORIGIN

Native to Asia and Europe.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond plant and food plant (edible tubers)

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify regional council if found



LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Apparently by deliberate planting and subsequent spread by water movement. Possibly cultivated as a vegetable by some ethnic groups.

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

Kasselman C (2003). Aquarium plants. Krieger Publishing company, Florida, 518pp.

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/sagittaria-sagittifolia/>

PDF DATE

06 June 2026