

Zantedeschia aethiopica 'Green Goddess'

COMMON NAME

green goddess

FAMILY

Araceae

AUTHORITY

Zantedeschia aethiopica (L.) Spreng. 'Green Goddess'

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Evergreen clump forming plant with large arrowhead shaped leaves (up to 45 cm long and 25 cm wide) and green flushed with white funnel shaped flowers (up to 25 cm long) with a bright yellow narrow sausage shaped centre (actually the flowers, the other part is a modified leaf).

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered throughout northern North Island, less common in southern North Island and northern South Island.

HABITAT

Swampy areas, often under willows and other damp shaded areas.

FEATURES

Robust, evergreen, erect, clump-forming, to 1.5 m high, in close-set tufts from a tuberous rootstock with white fleshy roots; new tubers arising from shoots on the rootstock. Leaves large, leathery; laminae sagittate or ovate-cordate, 15-45 × 10-25 cm, dark green, the very fine veins somewhat lighter green, shining, entire, tip apiculate, margins undulate; petiole 40-100 cm long, lighter green, spongy, white on inside, purplish on outside. Scape ± = leaves, green, stout. Spathe green variously flushed with white, to 25 cm long, funnel-shaped, narrowed towards tip with a recurved apiculus to 2 cm long. Spadix ± ½ spathe, bright yellow; basal female zone, with staminodia interspersed, c. ¼-½ length of spadix, contiguous with upper male zone; sterile terminal appendage 0. Berries green or yellow, to ± 1 cm diam.

SIMILAR TAXA

Unlike most other wetland plants, but two other large plants in the arum family are superficially similar. Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) and elephant ear (*Alocasia brisbanensis*) also have large leaves but arum can be distinguished by the veins of the leaf being the same colour as the rest of the leaf and the spathe being green and white, rather than uniform green or yellow.

FLOWERING

October to December

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow



Zantedeschia aethiopica cv. Green Goddess.
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Zantedeschia aethiopica cv. Green Goddess.
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FRUITING

Southern Africa

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds prolifically (Walter Stahel pers com). Seeds dispersed by water movement, birds and other animals. Local clonal spread by rhizomes, with longer distance spread by water movement, deliberate planting and garden discards.

YEAR NATURALISED

2002

ORIGIN

S. Africa, cultivation

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental plant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

TOLERANCES

Appear to be wider than for *Zantedeschia aethiopica*. The plant is tolerant of deep shade as well as full sun light. (Walter Stahel pers com)

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Healy, A.J.; Edgar, E. (1980). Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington. 220pp.

Weeds of Australia

(http://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/03030800-0b07-490a-8d04-0605030c0f01/media/Html/Zantedeschia_aethiopica.htm)

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/zantedeschia-aethiopica-green-goddess/>