

# Sagittaria platyphylla

## COMMON NAME

Arrowhead

## FAMILY

Alismataceae

## AUTHORITY

*Sagittaria platyphylla* (Engelmann) Smith

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A marginal aquatic plant, with lance-shaped leaves, white flowers and submerged strap like leaves.

## DISTRIBUTION

Locally naturalised, mostly Auckland and Waikato Regions.

## HABITAT

Still and slow flowing water bodies and wetlands.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Emergent rhizomatous perennial herb up to c. 1 m tall. Submerged leaves are strap-shaped, 10-50 cm long and 3 cm wide with clearly visible longitudinal veins. Leaves above the water have a long petiole (c. 40 cm) which is triangular in cross section and a lance-shaped leaf blade 10-25 cm x 2-8 cm. Flowers are 3-petalled, white with 3 petals and about 6 cm across. Tubers form on rhizomes. Flowers bend downwards when fertilised (a characteristic of this species) and fruiting heads globose, 0.5-1.5 cm across, each with many seeds. Seeds are brown, wedge shaped, 2-3 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, winged with a characteristic oblique beak.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Alisma* spp. *Alisma* species have lanceolate leaves but D-shaped rather than triangular petioles and much larger inflorescences with smaller flowers.

## FLOWERING

November - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

Autumn

## LIFE CYCLE

The plant increases density and spreads locally by its creeping root system. It spreads to other areas through seed carried by water, machinery, wildlife and humans, as well as rhizome fragments being transported by ditch cleaning machinery and spoil. Spreads by water dispersed seed, rhizomes, and tubers. Also deliberate planting. *Sagittaria* forms extensive infestations in shallow waterways, seriously restricting water flow and increasing sedimentation, thus aggravating flooding.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1998

## ORIGIN

Native to North America. First recorded at a field site in New Zealand on Auckland's North Shore in 1988.



## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental pond plant

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify regional council if found

## 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](#).

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Life cycle and dispersal information from (DoC,1998).

## 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>.

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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