

Arrowhead (*Sagittaria montevidensis*)



Flower and arrow shaped leaves

Arrowhead is a perennial aquatic herb that grows in static or slow moving, shallow fresh water such as drains, streams and pond margins.

The herb has a thick rootstock without creeping stems (unlike other *Sagittarias*). The large, glossy, arrow-shaped leaves are carried above the water on triangular stalks of varying lengths, up to 1 m or more tall. Between October and April flower stems grow from the base of the plant, bearing several whorls of flowers. These are comprised of 3 large, pure white petals, each with a purple blotch at its base. The flower heads are usually about the same height as the leaves, unlike the similar water plantain which has a much taller flower stem. The plant spreads by seeds which are produced in abundance, and are spread by water movement, or by contamination of drainage machinery.

This plant is of limited distribution in New Zealand, but has the potential to become a very serious problem. Any suspected new infestations should be reported to your Regional Council.