

# Arrowhead

## *Sagittaria montevidensis*

### Family

Alismataceae (water plantain)

### What does it look like?

Marginal perennial (occasionally annual) aquatic plant (<2+ m tall) with thick vertical basal rhizomes which produce buds. Soft, spongy 3-sided stems. Strap-like submerged leaves mostly on young plants, with strongly arrowhead-shaped emergent leaves (<25 mm long) on mature plants. Flowerhead is a leafless stem with whorls of 2-12 white flowers (<25 mm diam) with purple patch at base. Male flowers sit on stem above female flowers, and many seeds are produced.

### Are there any similar species?

*S. graminea* ssp *platyphylla* (sagittaria), is also weedy and *Alisma lanceolatum* and *A. plantago-aquatica* (water plantain), are both minor weeds that are similar to arrowhead, but all lack the arrow-shaped leaves.

### Why is it weedy?

Fast growing, matures quickly, produces widely dispersed, frost-hardy seed within six months. Overtops native species.

### How does it spread?

Seeds spread by water flow, livestock, and possibly waterfowl and diggers can spread rhizomes. Can also escape from ponds during flooding.

### What damage does it do?

Displaces most native marginal species, blocks waterways, contributes to flooding.

### Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Flowing or still, shallow water, marshes, swamps, streams, potentially throughout New Zealand.

### What can I do to get rid of it?

Suspected new infestations should be reported to your regional council.



[www.weedbusters.org.nz](http://www.weedbusters.org.nz)



Photo: Trevor James



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