

WEEDS

WEED ALERT!

by Sandy Lloyd

TWO new populations of the Declared Plant, *Sagittaria platyphylla* have recently been found near Perth, on the Canning River and Yule Brook. It causes severe problems in other States as it has the potential to block waterways and drainage ditches, and it can also infest natural wetlands. Thus it is important to stop it establishing in WA.

Anyone on the Coastal Plain from Perth to Dunsborough who has freshwater streams or wetlands, irrigation canals or drainage ditches on their property, should keep a careful lookout for *Sagittaria*.

There are 2 species, and both can grow to a metre above water level. *S. platyphylla* has strap-like leaves with a lance-shaped bit at the end, while *S. montevidensis* has arrowhead-shaped leaves. The flowers are produced in summer and are about 3 cm across, with three white petals and a bright yellow centre. The flowering stalk is

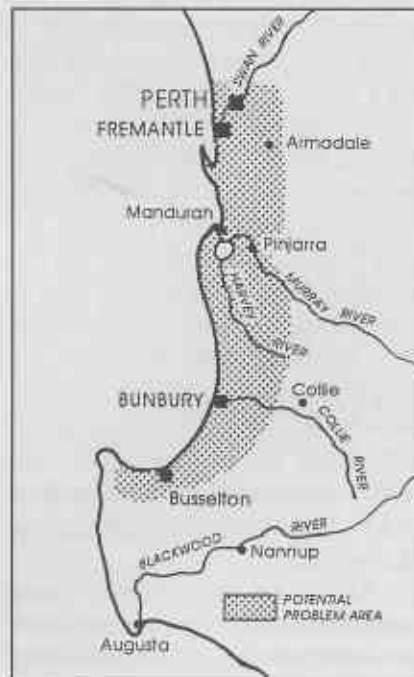


Sagittaria

Illustration by Helen Alston from 'Aquatic Plants of Australia', Melb. Uni. Press, 1973.

triangular. However, there are a couple of native plants with which *Sagittaria* can be confused, so, if you spot a possible infestation, contact

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for inspection by an expert.

John Tapley, AgWA
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would be interested in this or other Declared waterplants, such as Water Hyacinth or Salvinia. AgWA also has free colour brochures which provide more detail about the plant.