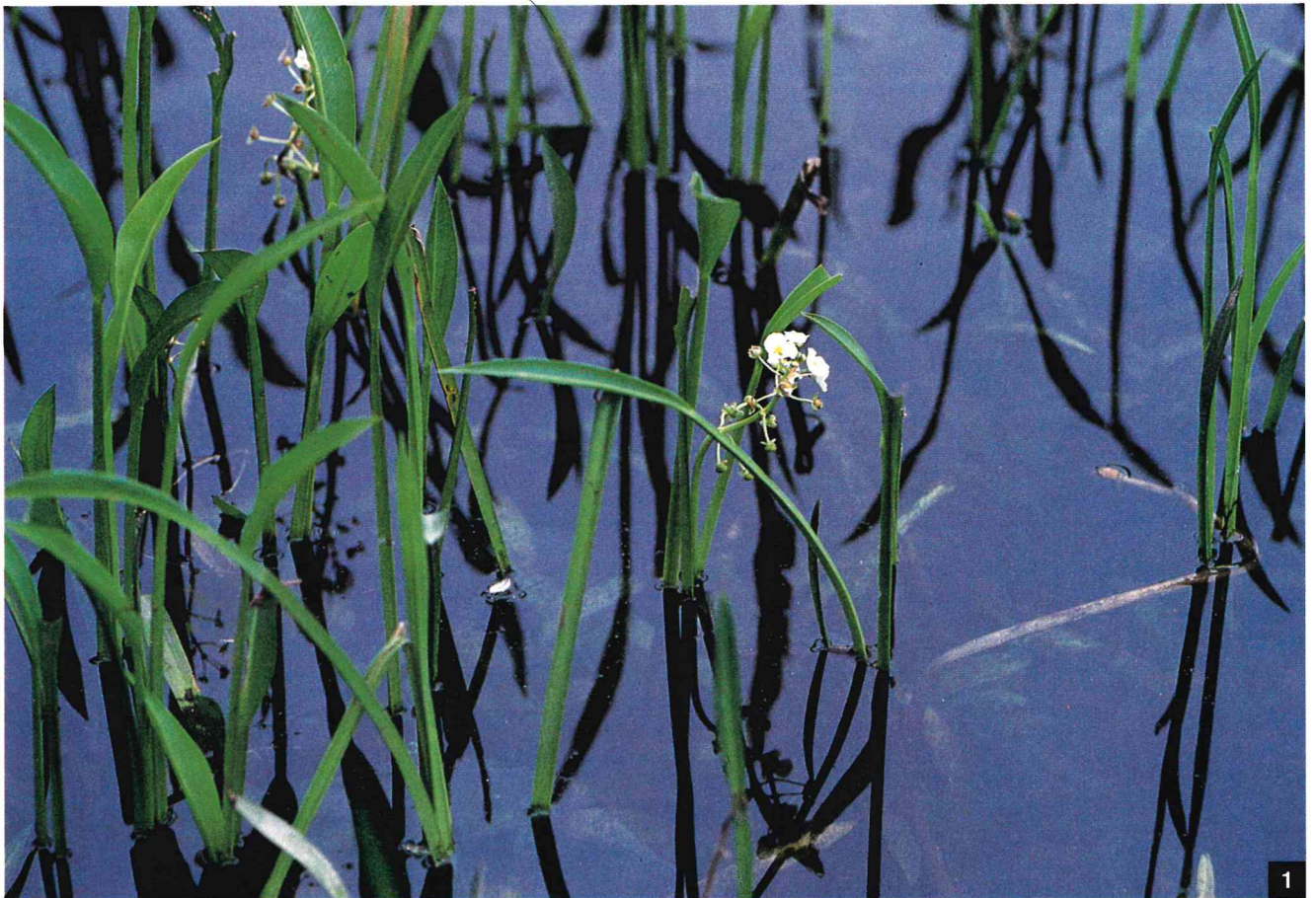


SAGITTARIA

OS:632-51(941) 607149



1. Mature plants
2. Infestation

3. Flower
(Photos: GR Sainty)

SAGITTARIA

What you should know about sagittaria

Sagittaria (*Sagittaria graminea*) is also known as arrowhead or duck-potato. It is a native of North America and has been widely introduced as an ornamental and is occasionally found in

aquarium shops in WA. It is a declared plant (noxious weed) in Western Australia and cannot be imported into the State or kept here. All plants present must be destroyed.

Why sagittaria matters to you

Sagittaria blocks irrigation channels and drainage ditches in north-central Victoria and New South Wales. It has become a nuisance

in rice fields in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area of New South Wales. It is a potentially troublesome aquatic weed in Western Australia.

What you should look for

- Sagittaria can grow up to one metre above the water level.
- The stems are erect and bear from two to 12 whorls of flowers during summer.
- Leaves growing above the surface are large, dark green and spear-shaped. They grow up to 25 cm long by 10 cm wide. They have conspicuous radiating veins and are carried on upright spongy stalks.
- Leaves that grow below the water surface are long, thin and strap-like.

- Flowers are about 3 cm diameter with three white petals and a bright yellow centre. They curve downwards after pollination
- A fruit composed of numerous beaked seeds, about 2 cm in diameter is produced.
- Sagittaria has a short brown and fleshy rootstock from which brown, branching fibrous roots grow. Attached to the rootstock are fleshy rhizomes and tubers.

Why sagittaria might succeed in WA

Sagittaria is perennial aquatic plant which reproduces by seed, rhizomes and tubers. It grows best in warm, shallow water up to 50 cm deep and in marshy areas. Seeds germinate in spring and grow slowly to produce flowering stems in summer. Flowering continues until autumn with seed slowly maturing through autumn and winter. Most seeds fall close to the colony but some may be eaten by ducks and remain viable when excreted. Rhizomes

are the major means of spread. They begin growing when the seedlings are about one month old and continue to grow slowly, producing tubers, throughout the growing season. Tubers and rhizomes remain dormant through winter, producing buds in spring. Sometimes sagittaria forms floating mats of vegetation that break up and take root elsewhere in the waterway.

What you can do about it

Report any plants which might be sagittaria. Never throw unwanted aquarium or garden pond plants into creeks or rivers. Dry and burn them.

Where to find out more

For further information on sagittaria, contact the Agriculture Protection Board, Baron-Hay Court, South Perth 6151. Telephone (09) 368 3472 or the nearest country office of the APB or the Department of Agriculture.
