Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Protect
Grow
Innovate



Biosecurity alert: Sagittaria

Sagittaria (*Sagittaria platyphylla*)

Photo: © MTipton15

The pest and its impacts

Sagittaria is an emergent aquatic perennial plant that spreads quickly and forms dense infestations in wetlands and natural watercourses. It can:

- reduce or change water flows, increasing the risk of flooding
- outcompete native water plants
- reduce water quality
- reduce food sources and habitat and restrict the movement of fish and other aquatic animals
- make recreation activities such as swimming, boating and fishing difficult.

Sagittaria platyphyllia is a declared pest for the whole of Western Australia and a Weed of National Significance. Infestations have previously been detected in Albany, the Perth metropolitan area and the Ord Irrigation Area in the Kimberley.

Sagittaria characteristics:

- Grows rooted in the beds of wetlands and waterways.
- Spreads by seeds, rhizomes (underground stems) and tubers. Entire plants can also break away and float downstream and establish new infestations.
- Rhizomes and tubers remain dormant over winter, with buds producing new shoots in spring.
- Flowering occurs from January to late autumn, with fruit maturing during autumn and early winter.

LOOK for this pest

- Grows up to 1.2 m tall, with lance-shaped adult leaves, and white 3-petalled flowers.
- Stems are triangular in cross-section.
- Submerged leaves are translucent and strap-like, reaching up to 50 cm in length
- Leaves emerging above the water are lance-shaped to 28 cm long and 10 cm wide, on long stalks.
- White, occasionally pink, flowers appear at the top of a leafless stalk, below leaf height, in 2 to12 whorls of three flowers, arising from the same position on the stem.



Sagittaria leaves



Sagittaria flowers

Key points:

- shade tolerant and forms dense patches, obstructing water flow
- outcompetes native water plants
- Attempting to remove plants by hand is ineffective, as stems break off at ground level, leaving the submerged roots intact and allowing the plant to regrow.

REPORT suspected sightings

- Prompt action is necessary to assist in eradication
- Note the date, time and location of the pest
- Take photographs, if possible

Report your observations

MyPestGuide® Reporter
via app or online
mypestguide.dpird.wa.gov.au

or

Pest and Disease Information Service
08 9368 3080
padis@dpird.wa.gov.au

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