

Arum italicum

COMMON NAME

Italian arum

FAMILY

Araceae

AUTHORITY

Arum italicum Mill.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

NVS CODE

ARUITA

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Heavily disturbed shrubland and forest, herbfield, damp areas with low cover, regenerating ex-pasture.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tuberous, clump-forming perennial 25-60 cm tall. Main tuber 4 cm diameter, many small tubers attached. Leaves up to 30 cm long, arrow shaped (young leaves thinner), glossy, dark-green with creamy midrib and main veins, purple-tinged, present from Autumn to Spring. Flower a yellow spike, surrounded by a 30 x 15 cm, pale green translucent bract. Berries 1 cm, orange or red, on flower stalk after leaves die back.

SIMILAR TAXA

May be confused with *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, or other lilly species (*Calla*, *Dracunculus*) but the dark green leaves with creamy mid-rib and veins are very distinctive.

FLOWERING

October, November

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

FRUITING

November, December

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Spreads via seed and slow vegetative spread. Probably bird dispersed.

YEAR NATURALISED

1945

ORIGIN

Eurasia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental



Arum italicum plant. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Wanganui. Oct 2007. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

TOLERANCES

Drought resistant once established.

ETYMOLOGY

arum: From the Greek word aron which means 'climbing' or 'poisonous plant'.

POISONOUS PLANT

All parts of the plant are poisonous including the bright orange berries.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/arum-italicum/>