

Arum lily

Zantedeschia aethiopica

Family

Araceae (arum)

Also known as

Death lily

Where is it originally from?

South Africa

What does it look like?

Evergreen, clump-forming tuberous herb (<1.5 m tall), with new tubers arising from shoots on the rootstock. Dark green, arrow-shaped leaves are large and leathery. Produces large white flower with a yellow spike and yellow-green berries (10 mm).

Are there any similar species?

Italian arum (*Arum italicum*) is similar and is also weedy, but has distinctive white veins on the tops of the leaves.

Why is it weedy?

Long-lived and persists under regenerating canopy, forming dense patches excluding other vegetation. Tolerates wet, wind, salt, hot to cold, most soil types and moderate shade, and is drought-resistant once established. Stock avoid it as it is poisonous, allowing it to gradually dominate grazed sites.

How does it spread?

Seeds drop near to parent plants, and are occasionally spread by birds and water. Clumps expand slowly by new shoots, and tubers and seed are spread by dumped vegetation and soil movement.

What damage does it do?

Smotheres the ground preventing the establishment of native plant seedlings. It is unlikely to poison native fauna.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Swamps, open damp areas with low cover, and regenerating ex-pasture, especially downstream or adjacent to infested areas.

What can I do to get rid of it?

Begin clearance at top of catchment.

1. Slash tops: Leave on site to rot down. Dig out tubers, dry and burn or bury deeply.
2. Cut down and paint stump: metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g) + glyphosate (100ml) + penetrant per L water. Leave on site to rot down. stems and leaves.
3. Spray: metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (3g) + glyphosate (150ml) + penetrant per 10L water.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Mowing gives no control. Digging usually leaves root fragments and dropped tuber pieces which resprout. Small infestations may be left untreated where regeneration to dense forest is occurring, however removal of arum will increase native seedling establishment rate. Exclude all livestock from site when treating.



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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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