

Botanic name: *Sagittaria sagittifolia* L.- Sp. Pl. 2: 993. 1753 [1 May 1753] (IK)

Common name: Arrowhead (English)

Family: Alistamaceae

Habitat: Aquatic

Distribution: India, America; Turkey; United Kingdom; Viet Nam, Australia; Austria; Belgium. Due to extensive exploitation of its tuber, existence of the plant in its natural habitat is currently under threat in many countries

Description: A herbaceous aquatic erect, perennial plant; leaves sagittate-shaped, glossy, borne on triangular stalks that vary in length with the depth of the water in which the plant is growing. The early, submerged leaves are ribbon like. The flower-stem rises directly from the root and bears several rings of buds and blossoms, three in each ring or whorl, and each flower composed of three outer sepals and three large, pure white petals, with a purple blotch at their base. The upper flowers are stamen bearing; the lower ones generally contain the seed vessels only. Tubers are walnut sized and grow just below the mud surface, produced on creeping runner.

Phytochemicals: Tannin, Saponins, Flavonoids, Phenols, Steroids. Also contains edible starch, protein, amino acids, sugar, fat, soluble and insoluble nitrogen and vitamin C in tubers and roots

Medicinal/ Economic use: Antiscorbutic, diuretic. The tuber is discutient, galactofuge and may induce premature birth. The leaf is used to treat a variety of skin problems. Traditionally, the tubers and young shoots (crown buds) are used as a seasonal vegetable in many recipes by, the various communities, and also as medicine by traditional healers, who are locally known as Meitei maibas (traditional male local healers) and, maibis (traditional female healers) in Manipur, India.