

# factsheet

## Facts for the horticulture media: weed information resource



### The media's responsibility

Many of the existing weeds in this country came to Australia as garden plants, some arriving with the First Fleet. In the early days of European occupation many garden plants appeared in seed catalogues and later, as an active horticultural media developed, gained in popularity through recommendation by garden opinion leaders.

Up until the late 1970's, the problem of invasive garden plants becoming agricultural and environmental weeds was largely unknown. However, this is not the case today. With the growth in awareness about invasive garden plants, many horticultural media people are taking a responsible position on weeds.

This fact sheet has been prepared to assist garden writers and presenters to check and find out more about plants they are recommending that may have weed potential.

It does take time and intellectual effort to check the weed status of plants before publishing or broadcasting. However, it is worth remembering that people in the media are seen by the public as experts in that field. The plants promoted or recommended in editorial content are generally assumed by the public to be safe. Surely it is up to all involved, writers, broadcasters, editors, researchers and others to live up to that responsibility.

All members of the horticultural media in Australia are encouraged to take the time to at least do the research necessary to avoid promoting invasive garden plants, if not working actively to increase public and industry awareness about them. Gardeners, all Australians and especially future generations deserve nothing less. Be aware there may also be some ramifications for promoting declared weeds under legislation in different States/Territories.

A list of contacts and publications to assist horticultural media people to check plants appears below. It has been prepared by Horticultural Media Association (Vic) member and invasive plant specialist Kate Blood.

### Invasive garden plants resource

In Australia, we have about 2 780 weeds. Of these, about 1 830 are introduced garden plants that have become feral and invaded farming land and natural areas including National Parks. So, over 65% of Australia's introduced weeds have started out as garden plants.

These 'garden thugs' are costing millions of dollars annually to control on farms and in bushland and other natural areas. Not only do they consume large amounts of resources in the agriculture and horticulture sectors, they are also having devastating impacts on our environment.

There are many information sources on which plants are problems.

### Weed books

A range of field guides and books are available for different parts of Australia. Examples include:

#### south eastern

Blood, K. (2001) Environmental weeds: A field guide for SE Australia. Bloomings Books, Melbourne. ISBN 0 9579086 0 1.

Muyt, A. (2001) Bush invaders of south-east Australia. R. G. and F. J. Richardson, Meredith, Vic. ISBN 0 9587439 7 5.



#### western

Hussey, B. M. J., Keighery, G. J., Cousens, R. D., Dodd, J. and Lloyd, S. G. (1997) Western weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia. Plant Protection Society of Western Australia. ISBN 0 6 46 32440 3.

#### northern

Smith, N. M. (2002) Weeds of the wet/dry tropics of Australia: A field guide. Environment Centre NT, Darwin, NT. ISBN 0-9580700-0-8.

**aquatics**

Sainty, G. R. and Jacobs, S. W. L. (2003) *Waterplants in Australia. A field guide* (4th). Sainty and Associates, NSW. ISBN 0-9581055-1-0.

**noxious**

Parsons, W. T. and Cuthbertson, E. G. (2001) *Noxious weeds of Australia* (2nd Edition). CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Vic. ISBN 0 643 06514 8.

**National weed lists**

There is a national list of garden thugs (naturalised invasive and potentially invasive garden plants) from WWF Australia at [www.wwf.org.au](http://www.wwf.org.au) or more up-to-date information from the original author, Rod Randall, at [rprandall@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:rprandall@agric.wa.gov.au)

The list of twenty *Weeds of National Significance* is available at [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au) and brochures on each weed available at [www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au)

The *28 National Alert List of Environmental Weeds* is available on [www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/alert-list.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/alert-list.html) and brochures on each weed available at [www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au)

To know if a plant is prohibited or permitted entry into Australia, interrogate the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service import condition database (ICON) at [www.aqis.gov.au/icon](http://www.aqis.gov.au/icon)

**State/Territory and local weed lists and contacts**

To make contact with State/Territory government agencies, go through the national Weedbuster website at [www.weedbusters.info](http://www.weedbusters.info). You can also become involved in Weedbuster Week in October each year or prepare media material to coincide with the national event. This site also has a fact sheet for gardeners about 'garden thugs'.

Many State/Territory and local government agencies produce weed lists including garden escapees. Check with your local government. Each State/Territory has a declared or noxious weed list. These are available through [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au) but check with each State/Territory government individually for recent updates.

**Weeds in the nursery and garden industry**

The Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management (Weeds CRC) has many information resources at [www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au) including:

Roush, R., Groves, R. H., Blood, K., Randall, R. P., Walton, C., Thorp, J. and Csurhes, S. (1999) *Garden plants under the spotlight* (draft). An Australian strategy for invasive garden plants. Weeds CRC and Nursery Industry Association of Australia.

A number of *Nursery Papers* have been produced by the Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia and are available

at [www.ngia.com.au](http://www.ngia.com.au)

- Importing plants
- Discovering alternatives to garden escapees
- Invasive plants not wanted in public or private gardens identified (a list of plants to be discouraged from use in Australian gardens)

A number of reports on invasive garden plants and quarantine issues have been published recently by WWF Australia at [www.wwf.org.au](http://www.wwf.org.au)

- Garden plants that are invasive plants of national importance: An overview of their legal status, commercial availability and risk status.
- Front door wide open to weeds: An examination of the weed species permitted for import without risk assessment.
- National list of naturalised invasive and potentially invasive garden plants.

**Global situation**

For the global weed list, look at:

Randall, R. P. (2002) *A global compendium of weeds*. R. G. and F. J. Richardson, Melbourne. ISBN 0 9587439 8 3.

**For further information visit the Weeds CRC's website: [www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au)**

**CRC for Australian Weed Management**

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