



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

25 November 2024

Ms Anita Campbell

Nursery and Garden Industry NSW & ACT

Email: info@ngina.com.au

Dear Ms Campbell,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. The Society is a community volunteer organisation consisting of approximately 850 members. The Society's aim is to conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains.

The Society is strongly focused on managing environmental weeds in the Blue Mountains. Weeds displace locally indigenous vegetation, smother natural ecosystems and destroy the habitat of indigenous animals. Weeds pose a serious threat to the environmental values of Blue Mountains National Park and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. At considerable expense, the Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) and National Parks and Wildlife Service staff and many hundreds of local bushcare volunteers work hard to control the spread of environmental weeds in the Blue Mountains. As a plant lover, I am sure that you are opposed to dense thickets of Privet or Tutsan, for example, overrunning local plant communities, protected ecological communities such as Blue Mountains Swamps, scenic areas and bush walks. Visitors to the Mountains wish to view our unique bushland, rainforests and waterfalls, and not expanses of Blackberry and Lantana.

The Society's concerns about the degrading impacts of environmental weeds are shared by the following organisations:

- Blue Mountains City Council *Development Control Plan 2015: Part C Environmental Management, Revision: Amendment 5 April 2023*
(<https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/development/planning-rules/development-controls-for-land-zoned-under-LEP-2015/DCP-2015>)
- NSW Government Department of Primary Industry *WeedWise*
(<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/>)
- Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water *Weeds in Australia* (<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/invasive-species/weeds>)
- Centre for Invasive Species Solutions *Weeds Australia* (<https://weeds.org.au/>)

- Gardening Responsibly Plant Sure and their numerous government, academic and commercial sector sponsors (<https://www.gardeningresponsibly.org.au/partner/current-partners/>);
- NSW Government Department of Primary Industry *No Space for Weeds NSW Weeds Action Program Guidelines 2020-2025* (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/nsw-weeds-action-program-guidelines-2020-2025.pdf>) and *NSW Biosecurity and Food Safety Strategy 2022 - 2030* (https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0016/1440061/18085-BFS-Biosecurity-Strategy-2022-26723.pdf);
- Invasive Species Council *Weeds* (<https://invasives.org.au/our-work/weeds/>).

As you would be aware, a recent news story on the website of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) highlighted the danger of nurseries, quite possibly inadvertently, selling plant species that have been listed as an environmental weed (<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/adelaide-drive/invasive-weeds/104104486>). In this particular case, the listed environmental weed, *Gazania*, was infesting a state protected ecosystem but was being sold in a local nursery.

The Society's view is that there is an urgent need for plant sale outlets to avoid selling any of the listed environmental weeds of the state/s, region/s and local government area/s in which they operate or have proximity to. The Society strongly encourages the Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT Ltd to take all possible steps to highlight to its member nurseries and plant outlets the damage that environmental weeds can cause to indigenous vegetation communities. The Society would be pleased to learn of the measures that your organisation implements to avoid the sale of environmental weeds by member outlets. For example, when was the *Grow Me Instead* plant advice scheme most recently updated, and are your members encouraged to publicise the scheme?

Thank you for considering the Society's position on this issue, and our request. I may be contacted on my email address: president@bluemountains.org.au

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Annette Cam
President
Blue Mountains Conservation Society
president@bluemountains.org.au