

**NATIONAL WEEDS AWARENESS
MEDIA RELEASE
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Weedbuster Week—time to make your garden friendly

Many householders may not realise that many of their backyard garden plants are potentially poisonous to children and pets, as well as being potentially invasive weeds.

Over 100 species of poisonous plants are available for purchase, with nearly half of these also being invasive plants, according to a WWF report on Poisonous and Invasive Plants in Australia.

National Weeds Awareness Coordinator Andrew Clark said Weedbuster Week was a time to be more aware of what is growing in your garden, remove any potentially harmful plants and grow only safe plants.

Research information identifies that thousands of calls each year are received by Poisons Information Centres relating to exposures to plants and many people are admitted to hospitals.

“Most of these issues relate to young children 0-4 years old. Over the years there have been several records of accidental deaths as a result of ingestion of these plants,” he said.

“Owners of pets also need to be vigilant, as invasive weeds, such as wandering Trad/Jew, are known to be harmful to dogs.

Weedbuster Week is under way from the 6-13th October 2007 with hundreds of activities happening around Australia.

The theme for 2007 — “Grow Me Instead” —is calling nationwide on gardeners to have a better knowledge of the plants growing in their back yard that are now causing billions of dollars worth of damage to farmers and environment each year.

“Gardeners should find out which plants are potentially invasive weeds and be prepared to replace them with non-invasive species.

“There are plenty of alternative plants to grow instead of invasive or poisonous plants.”

More information about Weedbusters can be found at www.weedbusters.info.

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