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Berserk garden escape weed potential highlighted in the Hunter

Garden plants which have the potential to escape and grow uncontrollably on land and water will be highlighted when NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) hosts the Australian Weeds Committee (AWC) in the Hunter on Tuesday, September 2.

NSW DPI weed control coordinator, Alan Maguire, said AWC representatives from all States and Territories will meet in Newcastle the following day to formulate national weed management strategies.

“We are using this opportunity to take participants into the field to see local research sites and management programs which have been put in place to combat weeds, many of which are garden escapees,” Mr Maguire said.

“Chinese violet is just one weed which has unnecessarily found its way into the environment, most likely when someone illegally dumped garden waste.”

First found in the Boat Harbour area in 1999 by NSW DPI weed researcher, John Hosking, the weed is now being successfully managed by the Port Stephens Council.

Chinese violet has now been added to the list of prohibited imports and can no longer be brought into Australia.

Mr Maguire said gardeners could get more information on which plants pose risks and discover alternative non-weed and native species from NSW DPI, its ‘NSW - no space 4 weeds’ program and accredited nurseries.

“Weed managers have identified a number of garden plants which have the potential to become uncontrollable environmental and agricultural weeds,” he said.

“The whole community can play an important role in managing weeds and that includes making informed decisions about what to plant in gardens.”

Biocontrol of bridal creeper and research trials to better manage lippia and alligator weed will be put on show for the AWC.

The weed tour and meeting coincide with national Weedbuster Week, September 1 to 7.

This year’s ‘Grow me instead’ theme also encourages people to plant native and non-weed species in their yards.

Media contact: Bernadette York, (02) 6391 3936 or 0427 773 785