



# North West Weeds

**NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL UNIT FOR GWYDIR AND INVERELL SHIRES**

Please address all correspondence to the General Manager, Gwydir Shire Council, Locked Bag 5, BINGARA, NSW, 2404 - Phone 02 6729 1016, faxes 02 6729 1400, email [tannerl@northnet.com.au](mailto:tannerl@northnet.com.au)

## Mother-of-millions

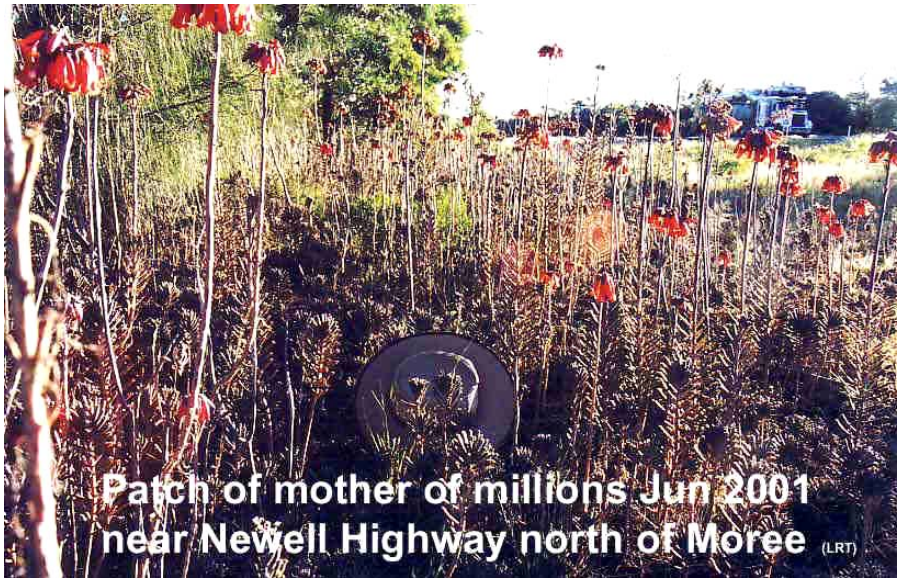
Mother-of millions (*Bryophyllum* spp.) is a native plant of Madagascar. Its beautiful flowers have made it a popular garden plant in eastern Australia, especially in the drier, inland areas. Unfortunately, mother-of-millions is highly toxic to stock!



Its attractive flowers have made mother of millions a popular garden plant... (LRT)

Mother-of millions is well named. Each plant produces thousands of plantlets which detach to form new plants. Its attractive flowers have made it a popular garden plant - its ability to reproduce in such large numbers and to withstand droughts explains why it has escaped from numerous gardens and rubbish tips to become a serious problem in many rural areas. [Photo - below left: patch of mother-of-millions adjacent to Newell Highway 30 k north of Moree]

[Photo - below left: patch of mother-of-millions adjacent to Newell Highway 30 k north of Moree]



Patch of mother of millions Jun 2001 near Newell Highway north of Moree (LRT)

### EFFECT ON ANIMALS

Mother-of millions, particularly at flowering, can be **VERY POISONOUS**. It continues to claim the lives of cattle throughout the north west.

In one of the worst reported cases in recent times, 125 cattle died in 1997 after feeding on mother-of-millions on a Moree stock reserve (M. Kane, Moree).

Greatest risk is during dry times when feed is scarce. And/or, when cattle are stressed or in unfamiliar territory (eg a new paddock) they are more likely to try plants they wouldn't normally touch.

To quote from the [Queensland Department of Natural Resources Pest Fact](#) (P33 Mar 00) on mother-of-millions, "POISONING SYMPTOMS in cattle include signs of dullness, loss of appetite, diarrhoea and heart failure. There are two responses to poisoning; acute, where cattle die within a day, and chronic, where cattle may take up to 5 days to die. Some cattle may make a slow recovery if insufficient plant material was eaten. TREATMENT OF POISONED STOCK must occur within 24 hours of consuming the plant. The treatment is intense and needs to be given by or under the direction of a veterinarian."

### MORE INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL WEEDS OFFICER:

Stephen Kneller Bingara 0427 240 061	Clem McLeod Inverell 0427 453 052	Doug Stieger Warialda 0427 291 912	Les Tanner Head Office 0427 241 806
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OR check out our website on [www.northwestweeds.nsw.gov.au](http://www.northwestweeds.nsw.gov.au)

**IDENTIFICATION**

Mother-of millions is a hardy, drought-resistant succulent. The plants grow upright (to 1m) thin “stems”, each containing numerous small “branches” or leaves. There are also hybrid versions which have similar flowers but serrated “branches”. Each leaf produces a number of plantlets. The plant flowers in the winter.



PLEASE NOTE that there other cacti-type plants that have a similar flower to mother-of-millions. Unlike these other plants, mother-of-millions stems are generally about the same thickness from top to bottom. Also, mother-of-millions plants don't have large, flat, “saw-tooth” leaves at the base of the plant. (Be aware that these other look-alikes may still be toxic to animals - the best advice is to keep stock away from any of these plants!)

**MORE INFORMATION?**

*Poisonous Plants Handbook for Farmers & Graziers* by EJ McBarron, Inkata Press ISBN 0909605297. NSW Dept of Primary Industries has on its weeds website an [Agfact](#) on poisonous plants. Queensland DPI also has a very good Factsheet on mother of

millions on its website.

**CC4(B) MANAGEMENT PLAN - Legal requirements within the Shires of Gwydir & Inverell**

The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled by conducting an on-going and effective treatment program to reduce plant numbers and to minimise the plant’s negative impact on the land. Boundaries and waterways must be kept free of the plant to prevent spread from the property. All reasonable measures are to be taken to ensure vehicles, machinery and livestock moved off the property are free of the plant. Plant must not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed.

**CONTROL METHODS**

**Non-Chemical Options:** Plants can be removed and burnt or stored in black plastic bags until completely destroyed. Encourage a strong pasture competition.

**Chemical Options:** Winter is usually the best time to treat mother-of-millions. The plants are then in flower and easier to find. According to NSW Dept of Primary Industries’ excellent booklet “*Noxious and Environmental Weed Control Handbook 2004/2005*”, treatments for mother-of-millions include:

Chemical options	Rate: Spot/Boom	Comments
Triclopyr +Picloram Grazon DS®	500 ml in 100 L of water	Apply at flowering, add surfactant
2,4-D amine 500 g/L Various trade names	500 ml in 100 L of water	Thorough even coverage of leaves and plantlets is necessary. Add a wetting agent
2,4-D acid 300 g/L AF 300®	700 ml in 100 L of water	Apply thorough even coverage of leaves and plants as necessary
Fluroxypyr eg Starane 200®	600 ml in 100 L of water	Actively growing seedlings and young plants before flowering
<b>OTHER HERBICIDES:</b>		
Metsulfuron methyl Various trade names eg Brushhoff® and Ally® PLUS glyphosate 360 g/L	10 g metsulfuron methyl plus 200 ml glyphosate 360 to 100 L water. Add non-ionic surfactant as per label	Hand directed spraying only. Apply at or just prior to flowering. Refer to <a href="#">permit (PER7156)</a> for full details

**IMPORTANT: USE OF PESTICIDES - ALWAYS READ THE LABEL**

Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they are registered and must not be used in any other situation or in any manner contrary to the directions on the label. Never use a herbicide in any way contrary to the label recommendations.

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained herein is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of North West Weeds or the user’s independent adviser. (LRT 15/06/06)