

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?



NSW Agriculture

Weed Alert

A form of Chinese Violet

Asystasia gangetica subspecies
micrantha



Flower and fruit of *Asystasia gangetica* subspecies *micrantha*. (Photograph: G Sainty)

A new invasive weed found in NSW

WORLD STATUS

A form of Chinese Violet, *Asystasia gangetica* subspecies *micrantha*, is a major weed overseas and has begun to naturalise in Australia.

The *micrantha* subspecies was first recorded in NSW as naturalised at Boat Harbour, north of Newcastle, in July 1999. It is now also known from a number of nearby locations.

The commonly cultivated Chinese Violet, *Asystasia gangetica* subspecies *gangetica*, is planted widely in Australia but is less weedy. This subspecies is naturalised at Port Douglas in Queensland, and in the Northern Territory at Bartalumba Bay and Groote Eylandt.

QUARANTINE

All subspecies of *Asystasia gangetica* have been added to the list of prohibited imports and can no longer be brought into Australia.

THE PROBLEM

Asystasia gangetica subspecies *micrantha* is a rapidly growing perennial herb that grows to 1m high, but can grow over shrubs up to 3m tall. It can smother all vegetation in the herbaceous layer. This weed grows in tropical and subtropical areas.



A dense mat of *Asystasia gangetica* subspecies *micrantha* in flower.



Plants grow in both shade and sun, smothering all understorey herbage.

Visit our website: www.agric.nsw.gov.au/weeds



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FOR MORE
INFORMATION:

Contact your local
council weeds officer
or district agronomist,
or telephone the
NSW Agriculture Hotline
on 1800 680 244.

IDENTIFICATION

Asystasia gangetica subspecies *micrantha* grows in mats similar to those formed by Wandering Jew, *Tradescantia fluminensis*.

Leaves and stems have scattered hairs. Leaves are paler below.

Flowers 20–25mm long, white outside and inside with some purple blotches in two parallel lines inside.

Fruit 30–31mm long, guitar shaped (with neck of guitar attached to stem) and containing four flattened seeds held in place by conspicuous hooks.

PROPAGATION

Plants spread by seed and/or rhizomes. The seeds are dispersed explosively from drying capsules but long distance dispersal is generally by man. Stems root at each node.

CONTROL

Seedlings can be removed by hand and bagged for disposal ensuring no rhizomes are left as these can develop into new infestations.

For herbicide control, contact your Council Weeds Officer or NSW Agriculture.

P. Gorham, Regional Coordinator (Weeds)

J. Hosking, Entomologist

NSW Agriculture

(Photographs: P Gorham, unless indicated otherwise)



Plants produce roots at nodes and can grow from seeds or pieces of root

20/14

Watch out for and report this form of chinese violet:

This weed may have been introduced as a garden ornamental. If you have seen this plant, please report it to your Council Weeds Officer or NSW Agriculture.