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Councils target garden pest plants with 'weed swap'

Townville City Council and Thuringowa City Council are enlisting the help of the local community to launch a suburban offensive on highly noxious garden weeds.

Both councils will provide free entry to the Vantassel St landfill and the Hervey Range Transfer Station and the Jensen Transfer Station on Sunday October 16 between 11am-4pm for the disposal of four targeted weeds – Lantana, Asparagus Fern, Ivy Gourd and Singapore Daisy.

Free native ornamental plants complete with growing instructions will be given in exchange.

The event is being called "Weed Swap" and is one of many local highlights during Weedbuster Week.

Acting Townsville Mayor Cr Ann Bunnell said Weed Swap was an opportunity for residents to do their bit to reduce the effects of noxious weeds on the local natural environment.

"The four targeted weeds easily spread and often jump the fence to neighbouring properties. This event is an opportunity for residents to check their gardens, dig out any of the offending weeds and bring them to the city tip to exchange for natives," Cr Bunnell said.

"Weeds know no borders and highly invasive weeds threaten all parts of Australia including grazing lands, waterways, national parks and urban environments. They cost Australia more than $4 billion every year and are one of the greatest causes of biodiversity loss," Cr Bunnell said.

Thuringowa City Councillor and chair of the Environmental and Community Services Committee Jenny Lane said noxious weeds were a growing problem in rural areas of Thuringowa.

``The sooner landowners can act to get rid of the pest weeds and prevent their rapid spread the better it is for both them and the environment,'' Cr Lane.

``The joint councils' weed swap initiative will hopefully see trailer load upon trailer load of weeds removed from the natural environment and destroyed.''

Weed Swap is an initiative of the Thuringowa City Council's Environmental Management Team, Thuringowa Waste, Townsville City Council's Environmental Services Department, Townsville Citiwaste, Greening Townsville and Coastal Dry Tropics Landcare Inc (CDTLI).

For further information about Weedbuster Week activities happening in Townsville contact Katrina Cullen (CDTLI) on 4721 4322/0437 431 855 or Townsville City Council on 4727 9003. For more information on activities happening in Thuringowa contact Sari Mangru on 4773 8735 or check out the website http://www.weedbusters.info.

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