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LANTANA

Lantana camara

Family: *Verbena* (*Verbenaceae*)

Afrikaans: Lantana

isiZulu: ubukhwebezana, ubhici

Description:

- ❖ Compact, flowering shrub or untidy scrambler up to 2 m or higher
- ❖ Forms dense thickets
- ❖ Has square stems with rows of small thorns
- ❖ The flowers are pink and orange (usually 2 colours per flower)
- ❖ Followed by fruits which become purple black when ripe



Not to be confused with indigenous harmless *Lantana rugosa* (Birds Brandy) which is much smaller with few, small light purple flowers and lighter purple fruits.

The leaves do not smell when crushed.

Has no thorns on the stems.

Origin:

- ❖ South America
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Reason for Introduction:

- ❖ Ornamental
 - ❖ Hedging
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Where found / Problems caused:

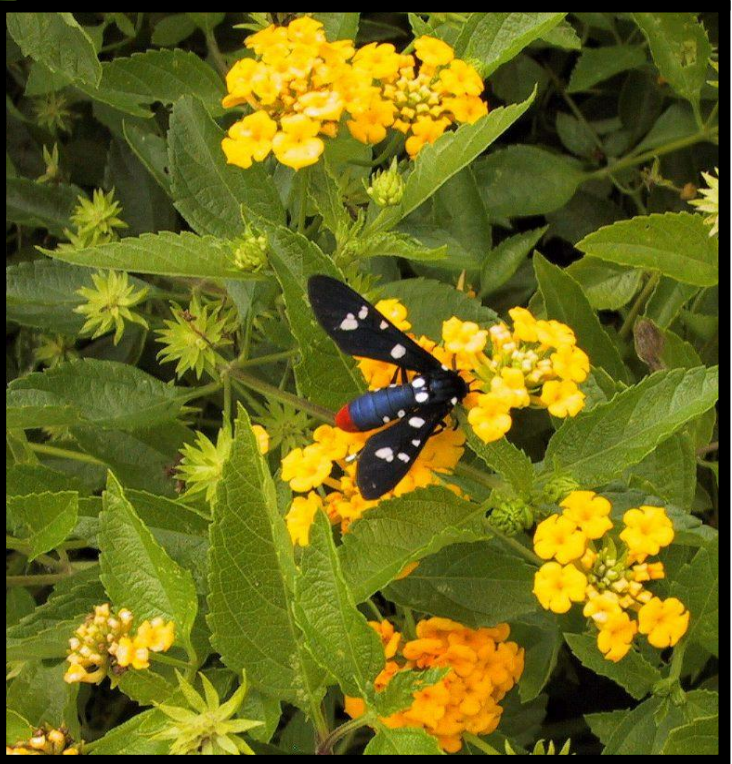
- ❖ One of the top ten worst weeds in the world and is a Category 1 declared weed
 - ❖ Birds eat the berries and spread the seeds, so that the plant has escaped from gardens and is now widely distributed in South Africa
 - ❖ Rodents and monkeys also help spread the seed
 - ❖ It can smother trees up to ten meters tall
 - ❖ The entire plant is toxic to humans and domestic animals
 - ❖ Displaces natural vegetation and compromises agricultural productivity
 - ❖ Competes with and replaces indigenous plants increasing erosion
 - ❖ Interferes with farming and forestry activities
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Did you know?:

- ❖ There are in excess of 50 varieties that differ in physical features and susceptibility to herbicides
 - ❖ Its common names are Cherry pie and Tickberry
 - ❖ Australia: *Lantana camara* is listed as the most significant environmental weed by the South East Queensland Environmental Weeds Management Group
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Control:

- ❖ Can be controlled by manual / mechanical or chemical means
 - ❖ Uprooting plants may work, but can lead to erosion and is labour intensive as well as costly
 - ❖ The best method: Plants should be cut at ground level and Round-up (commercially available herbicide with little side effects on other vegetation) applied to the cut surface to prevent re-growth
 - ❖ Follow-up treatment is essential
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Additional General Information:

- ❖ KwaZulu-Natal is one of the provinces of the Republic of South Africa that has a highly valued bio-diversity, and due to its climatic profile, it is also vulnerable to invasion by a number of alien species
- ❖ Of the estimated 9000 alien plants introduced (intentionally or unintentionally) to the Republic of South Africa, over 198 are currently classified as being invasive and over 30 of those occur in KwaZulu-Natal



Invasive Alien Species Programme (IASP)

Acknowledgements:

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- ❖ The Mtunzini Conservancy for the idea
- ❖ Invasive Alien Plants in KwaZulu-Natal Management and Control: A Wildlife Handbook, produced by WESSA-KZN
- ❖ <http://www.communitylife.co.za/LantanaCamara/tabid/105/Default.aspx>
- ❖ <http://www.georgiaperennial.org/newsletter/article010/index.htm>
- ❖ <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Twins.jpg>
- ❖ <http://www.wallpaper.net.au/wallpapers-plants-flowers2.php>

It is hoped that this series will create awareness in respect of Invasive Alien Plants and guide and advise us in terms of what is required to control and manage these plants

Should you have any questions or require further clarity, please contact:

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Disclaimer:

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