

Agapanthus Lily, a Noxious Weed!

by Pat Stachon

Yes, it is in New Zealand. I couldn't believe that a bulb that I have bought and tried to grow without any success is a noxious weed. I shall explain later.

In January last I visited my son and his family in New Zealand for three weeks and had a taste of a beautiful country of 3 ½ million people. The climate was warm, with a few rain showers here and there. I was interested in the plant life of the country and was overwhelmed by the unique native flora including many outstanding garden plants from specimen trees, to grasses, and ground-covers. The swing to an environmentally friendly gardening attitude is probably the biggest factor in the resurgence of their native plants. Haven't we heard this in Canada as well? I know that most gardeners are becoming more aware and want to know more of our native species. New Zealand has a sub tropical climate, and is a very green country. This is due, in large part, to the trees and shrubs which make up the forests. The vast majority are evergreen by nature, that pleases many but disliked by others because there is little change in the colour.

As my son drove me about (left hand drive) I noticed Agapanthus Lillies everywhere. They were in the ditches, roadsides, and sprouting in peoples yards. They are the golden rod of New Zealand! The lillies were just past their peak and going to seed. Roadside crews were whacking them, digging them out with front end loaders. Agapanthus Africanus known as Lily of the Nile: Beautiful blue globe like flowers with sword shaped leaves, make a spectacular display mid summer to fall. Bulbs must be dug up here for winter storage. They might survive in the Lower Mainland of B.C. and southern Vancouver Island.

It was summer in Auckland and all the annuals that we plant here were very evident. Their formal park plantings were Canna lillies of every colour and hue, orange being the most popular. Roses galore,

over 500 species in the Parnell Rose garden. Yes I saw blackspot too!

My family gave me a book called 1001 GARDENS YOU MUST SEE BEFORE YOU DIE.

This is world wide of course. I think I have 982 left.

