

**P**arthenium, a poisonous alien plant species, is quietly spreading through Hualien. There have already been several cases of the plant — which looks like the non-poisonous species Gypsophila — being picked and taken home by unsuspecting nature lovers.

The Agriculture Division of the Ji'an Township Office has asked local residents and tourists to be wary of the plant's poisonous cilia — hairlike protuberances on the plant — which can cause inflammation of the nose and even serious liver lesions.

Parthenium, listed by the Council of Agriculture's Endemic Species Research Institute as one of the 20 alien species most damaging to Taiwan's **ecology**, is thought to have invaded Taiwan when it was mixed with imported grain, just like Mikania micrantha, another alien plant.

Until recently, Parthenium had only been spotted in Kaohsiung and Pingtung, but now it looks like its territory has spread. Over the past two months, it has been spotted in Hualien's Ji'an, Shoufeng, and Sinchen Townships.

Ji'an's Agriculture Division says that the plant is highly adaptable, growing in native species' traditional territory such as farmlands, paddy fields, and low altitude hillsides. It has also invaded residents' backyards and can be found on both sides of the township's cycling path, posing a threat to local residents and tourists.

Township Chief Tien Chih-shuan says that to prevent the plant from spreading further, cleaners are being sent to **eliminate** it at each township. If the public see it, they should report it to the local authorities, to prevent people from touching it. Township Representative Huang Cheng-fu suggested that the Environmental Protection Bureau of the Hualien County Government mobilize its "community beautifiers" to launch an investigation to make the cleanup operation more efficient.

Originally from the tropics of Central and South America, Parthenium is a member of the Asteraceae family. It grows to between 30cm and 150cm, and has short soft hair on the edges of its leaves, making it easy to confuse with Gypsophila, a common flower in floral art.

Parthenium **blossoms** throughout the year and branches every 5cm. In addition to being an "eco-killer," the poisonous species is dangerous to touch. It has claimed the lives of sheep and oxen in Australia, India and elsewhere.

The best time to eradicate the plant is right before its blossom in early spring, when the chances of reproduction and pollination can be reduced. In addition to being pulled out by hand, farmers can use agricultural machinery or weedicide. After the plant has been pulled out, it should be let to rot in a plastic bag or incinerated.

(LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY EDDY CHANG)



## Poisonous alien plant species invades Hualien

### 把毒草「銀膠菊」誤認為「滿天星」

有「國際毒草」之稱的外來種植物銀膠菊，悄悄地在花蓮蔓延，甚至有人誤認為花材「滿天星」，帶回家種！農業課呼籲在地居民和遊客注意，銀膠菊纖毛具毒性，接觸後將引發過敏性鼻炎症狀，嚴重者會導致人體肝臟病變。

銀膠菊被農委會特有生物中心列為危害台灣生態的前二十種外來植物之一，與小花蔓澤蘭一樣，可能是進口穀物挾帶進來，過去只在高屏地區出現，不過，生長範圍持續擴大，近兩個月來，吉安鄉、壽豐鄉、新城鄉都可見到銀膠菊蹤跡。

吉安鄉農業課說，銀膠菊環境適應力強，低海拔的農地、田耕及邊坡取佔本土植物生長地盤，甚至入侵家庭庭院，鄉內自行車道兩側也常見，對居民、遊客已產生威脅。

鄉長田智宣說，為避免銀膠菊生長範圍繼續擴大，清潔隊已陸續前往各處清除，民眾若發現銀膠菊應儘速通報，避免誤觸，以免被傷害。吉安鄉代黃振富則建議，環保局發動社區美化員進行普查，清潔隊員再根據結果來全面清除，效率才能倍增。

原產於中南美洲熱帶地區的銀膠菊，屬菊科一年生草本植物，植株高三十分到一百五十分，葉面兩側被短柔毛或腺毛，易被誤認為石竹科的花材滿天星。

銀膠菊一年四季都會開花，每五公分就會分枝，生長繁殖的速度相當快，除了成為「生態殺手」，由於銀膠菊有毒，碰觸就有危險，在澳洲、印度等國曾發生放養的牛、羊中毒致命的案例。

清除的時機以早春開花前最佳，可降低繁殖和花粉飛散機會，除以人力拔除，農地可以農耕機具翻除，必要時以除草劑噴灑可控制生長數量，拔除後的植株可置於黑色塑膠袋中悶腐或乾燥後焚毀。（自由時報記者甘育璋）



#### SPOT THE DIFFERENCE:

The top picture shows Parthenium, a poisonous species alien to Taiwan. The bottom photo, supplied by the Taipei Flower Auction Company shows non-poisonous Gypsophila growing in the wild.

PHOTOS: TAIPEI FLOWER AUCTION COMPANY AND KAN YU-WEI, LIBERTY TIMES

#### 比較：

上圖為有毒外來植物銀膠菊，下圖則是台北市所提供的無毒野生滿天星。

照片：自由時報記者甘育璋及台北市

#### TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

##### 1. **ecology** /i'kælədʒi/ n.

生態 (sheng1 tai4)

例：This area is famed for its diverse ecology. (這個地區以其生態多樣性聞名。)

##### 2. **eliminate** /i'li:mə,net/ v.

消除 (xiao1 chu2)

例：The government is planning to eliminate homelessness by 2013. (政府計畫在二〇一三年前解決街友問題。)

##### 3. **blossom** /'blasəm/ v.

開花 (kai1 hua1)

例：The flower has red petals and blossoms once a year. (這種花的花瓣是紅色的，每年會開花一次。)