



### ***Bryophyllum sp*** **MOTHER OF MILLIONS**

**SEPTEMBER 2008**

A low succulent plant with an ability to colonise areas with poor, thin soil. Common on exposed ridges, it gains its name from its ability to spread prolifically from plantlets on the tips of leaves that are shed at the slightest disturbance.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Mother of Millions is a smooth fleshy succulent plant up to 1 m in height. It has pinkish grey stems. Its leaves have 2-3 pairs of small teeth on their tip with buds that produce plantlets. Leaves vary depending on the species. *Bryophyllum delagoense* has cylindrical leaves with purple markings and a slight groove in the upper surface. *Bryophyllum daigremontianum* x *Bryophyllum delagoense* (hybrid or crossbred Mother of Millions) has boat shaped leaves with thick stalks and with notches all along the edges. *Bryophyllum pinnatum* has flat leaves simply or pinnately divided into elliptical leaflets. Flowering in winter, Mother of Millions has yellow to red bell shaped flowers arranged in clusters at the end of a stem.

#### **EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

Mother of Millions is very hard to control and eradicate due to its ability to spread and its hardiness. Due to the regular droppings of plantlets, Mother of Millions has the ability to spread quickly. It is well adapted to dry environments and able to survive droughts. It is also known to be toxic to some animals and humans.

#### **HABITAT**

Mother of Millions is well adapted to dry and drought conditions due to its succulent nature. It quickly inhabits disturbed areas. It is most commonly found in shallow sandy soils, in shady woodlands, along roadsides, rail tracks, fence lines and rubbish dumps. It flourishes when there is a small amount of leaf litter or debris around.



A single plant growing in leaf mulch.



Flowers of Mother of Millions  
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

## ORIGIN AND DISTRIBUTION

Originating from Africa and Madagascar, Mother of Millions was introduced to Australia for ornamental purposes. It is a popular garden plant. Reproduction is by plantlets on the edge of the leaves that drop regularly, quickly establishing roots and forming a new colony. It is known to spread by water during flood events. Mother of Millions is now found throughout NSW as well as in many other states in Australia.

## DECLARATION

Mother of Millions is an environmental weed in Sutherland Shire. It is declared noxious in some council areas of NSW. It is important that environmental weeds be destroyed, as they can affect human health, or can be invasive in the natural environment killing the native flora and reducing the natural biodiversity. Native animals may also be affected due to the loss of their natural habitat.

## CONTROL

The main control method of control of Mother of Millions is hand pulling followed up by regular monitoring to check for re-sprouting. Herbicide controls are available. Please contact council officers if you would like further information about these.



Mother of Millions scattered through bushland.  
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

For further information contact  
Bushcare or Greenweb Units  
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