

## Kerikeri nursery wins Most WeedWise Award

Kerikeri Plant Production has been judged New Zealand's Most Weedwise Nursery in the inaugural Council of Australasian Weed Societies awards.

The awards have been run in both New Zealand and Australia to celebrate nurseries that sell only 'environmentally-friendly' plants that are unlikely to invade and damage natural areas.

Nurseries nominated for the award must not sell plants likely to cause problems in native bush areas because their seeds are carried there by birds, or if they get 'dumped' on roadsides or in reserves by people tidying up their gardens. Other important criteria include the correct labelling of plants, and efforts by the nursery to educate customers and others about the possible impact of invasive plant species on the environment.

Owners Julia Colgan and Tom Lindesay were presented with the award by Philippa Stevens, President of the New Zealand Plant Protection Society. The Society is the New Zealand arm of the Council of Australasian Weed Societies that will be making the awards annually.

"Julia and Tom's nursery meets all the criteria for the award," said Ms Stevens. "The competition for the award was tough but their nursery won through."



**Photograph:** Tom and Julia receive the award from Philippa Stevens.

Tom talks about the award, “We’re very pleased – and honoured - to have been chosen for this. It was quite unexpected – one of our staff, Bronie Nicol, nominated us for it.”

Julia chips in “We try to grow a range of natives, especially those that grow well in Northland and the outer islands. Although we specialise in natives, we do sell some exotic trees suitable for Northland conditions. But we make sure they don’t include any invasive species.”

The nursery encourages gardeners to remove species in the *Delightful but Destructive* brochure produced by Northland Regional Council. Julia again, “We make this brochure freely available to our customers. We also use the Regional Council’s *Northland Natives* booklet to advise customers on native plants suitable for their area.”

The award for New Zealand’s most WeedWise nursery will be made every year. Details of the criteria and how to enter are on the NZ Plant Protection Society’s website at [www.nzpps.org](http://www.nzpps.org). Nominations for next year must be with the Society’s secretary by 30 April 2008.

The Council of Australasian Weed Societies is made up of representatives from Societies in all Australian States and in New Zealand. Amongst other activities it organises the Australasian Weeds Conference, which will be held for the very first time in New Zealand, in Christchurch.