



**Title:** “Ghost Allium”

**Description:** *Allium siculum*, an ornamental and culinary plant, in a shady corner, at the end of spring.

**Photographer:** Nicola Pye

**Where, when:** Maple Glen Gardens, Wyndham, November 2021

**Sustainability?** This image features an example of the Sicilian honey garlic plant, grown at the very beautiful Maple Glen Gardens. The owners [advocate strongly](#) for growing introduced as well as native plants. Their emphasis is on the importance of establishing functioning ecosystems with both introduced species, like the *Allium* I photographed, and native species. This is a local example of a much wider debate in the New Zealand conservation movement – there is a natural yearning to restore the native, and especially endemic species, in New Zealand’s landscape because they are so much part of our national identity. But introduced plants are now providing many of the “ecosystem services” that were once performed by missing native species.

Introduced species are not all bad, and some are now loved as part of our history and pleasure in our diverse new ecosystems. For some conservationists, an assemblage of native and introduced species lacks “ecological integrity” and represents a spoiled environment – for others the presence of introduced species is a new reality to be embraced and enjoyed, especially if the introduced species are keeping systems going.

From a practical ecological management point of view, it is the widespread and abundant species that are the most important to understand and manage wisely (sometimes to control, other times to encourage). Rarer and threatened species deserve our care too, especially for future adaptability of our ecology in the face of climate change and the ongoing onslaught of introduced pests.

Whatever your opinion about the wider debate of natives vs introduced biodiversity, there's no doubt that the owners of Maple Glen have done a fantastic job of creating a really paradisaical garden from some empty paddocks.

My focus on an edible plant here is also part of an increasing trend to use plants other than just vegetables in cooking or for medicine. Nurturing edible plants in open spaces, and even in towns, is a useful way of reconnecting people with nature – a small and healthy step back from being solely a hunter gatherer in supermarkets!

**Photo notes:** *Camera:* Canon EOS 650D. *Lens:* Canon EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM. *Settings:* f/9 1/800 sec ISO800 53mm.

I chose to make this image black and white because it was the shape of the plant that I particularly liked, and I found the colour and the background plants quite distracting. Monochrome really helps to draw your attention to the 'main' feature of an image. In colour, this is the kind of image that looks much better in real life!

**Digital specs:** 3251 x 4578 pixels (7.15 MB).

**Key words:** Flowers, weeds, monochrome, ornamental, allium, *Nectaroscordum siculum*, honey garlic, botany, environmental threats, biodiversity, introduced vs native plants, ecosystem services, edible plants, Nicola Pye, Aotearoa, New Zealand, sustainability

**Price:** \$150 (incl. GST) for use of the digital image.

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Animals are often used as pawns in domestic violence situations, just as children can be. Many people delay leaving, or do not leave, dangerous relationships at home, as they may not be able to take their pets with them, and know that to leave them behind will not be safe. Pet Refuge provides temporary accommodation and care for animals, so that their owners can escape to safer places, knowing that their pet will be cared for until they are settled in a new violence-free life. This can be particularly important for children who may have lost other major relationships through domestic violence, and need as much emotional security as possible.

**Image Ref:** NP#005 (Please refer to this reference in orders and correspondence).

**Nicola Pye**  
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