



Rosary Pea

Abrus precatorius

Description:

A woody vine with alternating leaves 5-13cm long. Leaves are evenly-pinnately compound with 5-15 leaflets. Fruit resemble pea pods, and the seeds are bright red with a black dot.

Interesting Facts:

The seeds are highly toxic and even one can be enough to kill. It was introduced to Florida as an ornamental plant in 1932 from Asia. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Air Potato

Dioscorea bulbifera

Description:

A twining herbaceous vine up to 20m in length. Leaves are long petioled, alternate, heart shaped with basal lobes. It has aerial tubers up to 12cm in diameter.

Interesting Facts:

It was imported from Africa in the 1920s for food and ornamental reasons. The vine grows extremely fast and aerial tubers can sprout anywhere. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.





Skunk Vine

Paederia foetida

Description:

It is a twining vine that likes to grow on other plants. The leaves are long, oval and hairy. The flowers are small and grow in clusters. They can be pink to lilac in color. Seeds are dotted with white specks and come two per pod.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced around 1897 from Asia and was quickly identified as problematic. It gets its name from the smell it emits when the leaves and stems are crushed. It is a category 1 invasive species in Florida.



Castor Bean

Ricinus communis

Description:

It is an evergreen semi-woody shrub to 40ft in height. Leaves are palmate with 5-11 incised lobes and are a glossy reddish-green. Leaves can be up to 30 inches across. Seeds look like swollen ticks.

Interesting Facts:

It was imported from Africa as a crop. The seed is used to make medicine; however, the seed shell contains ricin, one of the most deadly known natural poisons. It is a category 2 invasive in Florida.





Camphor Tree

Cinnamomum camphora

Description:

It is an evergreen tree with a height of 20m. Leaves are simple, alternating mostly oval and 4-10cm in size. They are glossy green on top and dull below.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced in 1875 from Southeast Asia for the production of camphor oil. Leaves, when crushed, give off a strong camphor odor. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Senegal Date Palm

Phoenix reclinata

Description:

This is an evergreen palm that grows in clusters or clumps up to 50ft in height. Fronds are odd-pinnately compound and do not droop. At the base of the leaf stem, it has very sharp thorns.

Interesting Facts:

It was imported from Africa for landscaping. The palm makes a good barrier and hedge. Thorns are very sharp and can penetrate shoes and clothing. It is a category 2 invasive in Florida.





Carrotwood Tree

Cupaniopsis anacardioides

Description:

It is an evergreen tree that can be up to 10m tall. The bark is grey with an orange inside. Leaves are alternating compound and even-pinnate. They have 4-13 leaflets and are oblong. Leaves are shiny yellow green. The flowers are white to yellow in clusters.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced in the 1960s for landscaping from Australia. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Brazilian Pepper

Schinus terebinthifolius

Description:

It is an evergreen shrub that can grow to 13m in height. It has multi-stemmed trunks that intertwine. Leaves alternate and are odd-pinnately-compound and have 7-9 leaflets. Leaves are dark green on top and pale underneath with obvious veins. Fruit in cluster and are bright red.

Interesting Facts:

It arrived in Florida in 1840 as an ornamental plant from South America. It is related to poison ivy and can cause irritation. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.





Cogan Grass

Imperata cylindrica

Description:

It is a perennial grass that grows in tufts. Leaf sheaths are short. Blades are narrow and pubescent at base and flat above. Blades can be 1.2m long and have a pointed tip and an off-center midvein. Inflorescence is dense and narrow and is silky-white in color.

Interesting Facts:

Cogan grass is the 7th worst invasive in the world. It is from Southeast Asia and was brought in as a soil stabilizer in 1911. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Water Hyacinth

Eichhornia crassipes

Description:

It is a floating herb that grows in dense mats. The roots are blue-black and feathery. Leaves are in rosettes with petioles to 30cm. They are a glossy green in color and are bulbous near base. Flowers are lavender-blue with a yellow blotch. The inflorescence is a spike 30cm long.

Interesting Facts:

It was brought in from the Amazon basin in 1884 to an exposition in New Orleans. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.





Australian Pine

Casuarina equisetifoli

Description:

It may reach 150ft in height. Bark ranges in color between grey and a reddish brown, and is easily broken. Leaves resemble pine needles, but have many nodes. Flowers are small and inconspicuous.

Interesting Facts:

It is salt tolerant and produces a chemical which inhibits other plants from growing. It was introduced from Australia in the late 1800s. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Caesar Weed

Urena lobata

Description:

It can grow up to 6ft tall. The leaves are grey in color and have a raspy feel to them. The fruit have 5 separated parts that break off when mature. The flowers resemble hollyhocks.

Interesting Facts:

It is grown to make burlap and twine in other parts of the world. The weed is a member of the mallow family. It is a category 2 invasive in Florida.





Chinaberry

Melia azedarach

Description:

It can grow up to 50ft in height and has purplish bark. The flowers are small and have 5 petals. The fruit are small and yellow to yellowish-green in color.

Interesting Facts:

The berries are toxic to humans and most animals. It is found in 23 counties in Florida. It was introduced in 1830 from Asia. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Common Guava

Psidium guajava

Description:

It is an evergreen shrub that can grow up to 30ft tall. Its bark is scaly and brownish-green. The leaves are opposite and simple and short stalked. The flowers are white and fragrant. The fruit are 1-4in long and oval shaped and yellow when mature.

Interesting Facts:

It is home to the Caribbean fruit fly which is harmful to citrus crops. It was introduced from Tropical America in 1785 for its fruit. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.





Johnson Grass

Sorghum halepense

Description:

It is a tall stout grass that grows in clumps. It has wide leaves up to 20 inches with a white midvein. The stems are rusty to red in color near the base. It has a reddish seed head and can reach a height of 8ft.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced from the Mediterranean region. Johnson grass is very hardy and not affected by most herbicides and it can sprout from cuttings, making it very hard to eradicate.

It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Lantana

Lantana camara

Description:

It is a deciduous shrub that can get up to 6ft tall. The flowers grow in clusters and are multi-colored with 4 lobes. The fruit is berry-shaped; they start out green and turn blue-black when mature. Leaves are opposite, simple and squared-off, and very aromatic.

Interesting Facts:

The berries are very toxic and can be fatal to children. It was introduced from the West Indies. The shrub produces allelopathic chemicals that enable it to out-compete other species. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.





Laurel Fig

Ficus microcarpa

Description:

It is an evergreen tree that can reach 50ft in height. It has aerial roots and brown smooth bark. The leaves are dark green and oval-shaped, with a leathery texture. The fruit are ½ inch in size and start green and turn yellow or dark red when ripe. The flowers are inside the fruit.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced as an ornamental plant from India in 1912. It can grow anywhere, including gutters and in other trees. Its spread was enabled by the accidental importation of its pollinating wasp. It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.



Melaleuca/Punk Tree/Bottlebrush Tree

Melaleuca quinquenervia

Description:

It is an evergreen tree that can get up to 50ft in height. It has simple grey-green leaves. The bark is soft and multilayered and peels easily. The flowers are in white spikes around a center stem. The fruit is in a wooden case.

Interesting Facts:

It was introduced in 1906 from Australia. It was used by the Army Corps of Engineers to try and dry out the Everglades.

It is a category 1 invasive in Florida.

