Brazilian Pepper

Schinus terebinthifolius (Raddi)

Anacardiaceae

Biology

- Native to Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil
- Introduced to Florida in mid 1800's
- Same plant family as poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac
- Individuals may show sensitivity
  - Rash, dermatitis
  - Respiratory problems during bloom

Background

Economic Uses

- Cultivated since the 19th century as an ornamental
- Hedge plant
- Bright red berries and glossy green foliage

Distribution

- Found throughout much of central and south Florida >700,000 acres
- Commonly found in hammocks, pinelands, mangrove forests – ranges from aquatic to terrestrial habitats
- Also found in warmer coastal areas, far north and west as Santa Rosa County

Brazilian Pepper Distribution in Florida

Impacts

- Category 1 invasive species (FLEPPC)
  - Able to spread into undisturbed sites
- Produces an almost impenetrable canopy
- Shades out desirable species, displaces plants and animals

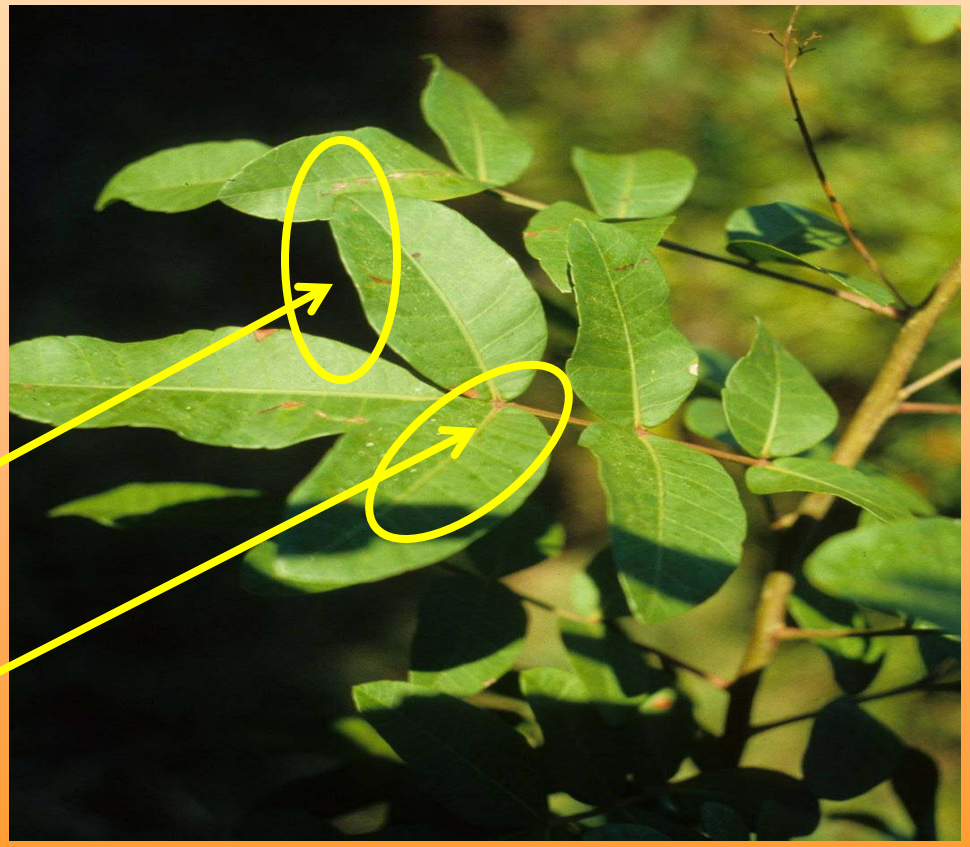
Identification

Mature Plant

- Shrub or small tree – 30 feet in height
- Short trunk, highly branched, thick rangy appearance
- Long-lived > 30 years

Leaves

- Alternately arranged
- 1 to 2 inches long
- Finely toothed margins
- Reddish-orange midrib



Flowers

- Flowers occur in clusters
- White, 2 to 3 inches long
- Occurs from September to November

Fruit and Seed

- Fruits are borne in clusters, initially green, turning red
- Mature in December
- Readily eaten by birds, high dispersal in Florida
- Dark brown seeds

Management

Preventative

Cultural

Mechanical

Biological

Chemical

Preventative

1. Limit planting as an ornamental
2. Remove existing plants, including resprouts and before seeds are produced
3. Avoid use of possibly contaminated mulch with Brazilian pepper seeds
4. Prevent seed spread and dispersal
5. Rouge out trees in abandoned areas

Cultural

1. Programs to educate homeowners about the problems associated with Brazilian pepper and proper identification
2. Maintain good ground cover and mixture of plant species to reduce establishment

Biological

1. There are no known biological control agents available for Brazilian pepper management in Florida or the southeastern U.S.
2. However, several are currently being evaluated

Mechanical

1. Hand pull young seedlings, including all roots, repeated pulling for resprouts
2. Cut tree down at ground level
3. Girdling is effective for large trees
   - Cut through bark approximately 6 inches above the ground, encircling tree base
4. Mowing is effective on small saplings and resprouts, but must be repeated

Chemical - Foliar

1. Over-the-top applications for seedlings, resprouts and small trees
2. Thoroughly wet leaves with herbicide
   - ✓ Triclopyr – 2% solution
   - ✓ Glyphosate – 2% solution
   - ✓ Imazapyr - 0.5 to 1.0% solution
   - ✓ Use surfactant at 0.25%
3. Best results applied July to October

Chemical - Basal

1. Individual trees, near desirable species
2. Use 25% triclopyr solution with basal oil
3. Apply 12 to 15 inches above ground on tree trunk
4. Wet thoroughly for good control, spray until run-off is noticeable at ground line

Chemical – Cut Stump

1. Individual trees, near desirable species
2. Cut trunks/stems horizonally at or near ground level
3. Apply 25% solution of glyphosate or triclopyr; 10% solution of imazapyr
4. Cover the outer 20% of the stump
5. Marker (blue) dye is helpful

Useful Links

- Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk: http://www.hear.org/pier/index.html
- University of Florida Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants: http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/welcome.html
- University of Florida's Cooperative Extension Electronic Data Information Source: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html

Useful Links

- Francis, J.K. *Schinus terebinthifolius* (Raddi) Brazilian pepper-tree. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. http://www.fs.fed.us
- Elfers, S.C. FLFO. Element Stewardship Abstract for *Schinus terebinthifolius* Brazilian pepper-tree. The Nature Conservancy. http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/

Literature Cited

- Hall, D.W. 2003. Weeds in Florida, SP 37, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida.
- Langeland, K.A. and K. Craddock Burks. 1998. Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. IFAS Publication SP 257. University of Florida, Gainesville. 165 pp.
- Gioeli, K. and K. Langeland. 1997. Brazilian Pepper-tree Control. Publication SS-AGR-17. Agronomy Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida.