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Chapter: 20

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OLIVE FAMILY

Oleaceae

COMMON NAMES

English: Brazilian jasmine, Gold Coast jasmine; jasmine

DESCRIPTION

Evergreen, woody, and twining vine (to 4–6 m in length) with round or cylindrical and hairy stems (1 cm in diameter) becoming hairless when mature.

Leaves: Green, trifoliate (5–10 cm long), leaflets (3) broadly egg-shaped (2–5 cm long and 2–3.5 cm wide) (terminal leaflet larger than lateral ones), apex or terminal end with a sharp point or tapering gradually to a protracted point, base almost with an abruptly transverse end as if cut off, margins entire, upper surface covered with very short fine straight erect hairs, lower surface with prominent mid-vein, held opposite each other on stems; leaf stalks variable (0.5–2 cm long), hairy. **Flowers:** White, petals (brightly coloured parts of flower) are fused into a narrow, slightly curved tube (2.5 cm long), in axillary cymes (flat-topped or convex flower-cluster), fragrant.

Fruits: Berries (fleshy fruits that do not open at maturity), round (5–8 mm in diameter), green turning purple or black as they mature, shiny.

ORIGIN

Tropical Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornament

INVADES

Roadsides, disturbed areas, urban open space, croplands, pastures, riverbanks, and forest edges/gaps.

IMPACTS

Climbs into and over other vegetation, smothering native plant species. By climbing high into tree canopies it shades out herbs, shrubs, and trees in the understorey of native forests (Hammer, 2000; Motooka *et al.*, 2003; Francis, 2004; Langeland *et al.*, 2008; González-Torres *et al.*, 2012; PIER, 2012). By displacing these native species, changing community structures and altering ecological functions invasions can lead to the collapse of native plant communities. The decline of *Pilosocereus royenii* (L.) Byles & Rowley (Cactaceae) in Laguna Cartagena may be partially explained by the invasion of *J. fluminense* (Weaver, 2011). It has been included in the Global Compendium of Weeds (Randall, 2012) and is considered to be aggressive, troublesome and difficult to control in the tropics and subtropics (Francis, 2004; Langeland *et al.*, 2008; Acevedo-Rodríguez and Strong, 2012; PIER, 2012). Widespread in Florida, where it invades hardwood forests and cultivated ground (Hammer, 2000; Langeland *et al.*, 2008). In Hawaii, it has invaded lowland dry forests where it covers all other vegetation (Wagner *et al.*, 1999; Motooka *et al.*, 2003).

NOTES

Introduced to most Caribbean islands but only recorded as invasive on Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico (CABI, 2021). In Cuba, *J. fluminense* is regarded as one of the most noxious invasive species affecting and transforming natural environments (González-Torres *et al.*, 2012). In Puerto Rico, it is common in pastures, disturbed areas, and along roads (Francis, 2004; Acevedo-Rodríguez, 2005). On St John, US Virgin Islands, it is a "naturalized species, occasional in open, disturbed sites" (Acevedo-Rodriguez, 1996). Widely distributed in Antigua and Barbuda, where it smothers native vegetation (Pratt *et al.*, 2009). This finding was confirmed by our surveys together with invasions on St Kitts and Nevis (A. Witt, *pers. obs.*). Probably invasive on more islands than reported.



Jasminum fluminense Vell

