

How to Identify Brazilian Peppers

- Brazilian peppers (Schinus terebinthifolius) are large multi-trunk shrubs that can grow 40 feet tall.
- They are evergreens with glossy, bright green leaves, nonleathery in texture. When crushed, the leaves smell like turpentine.
- The leaves are "compound," meaning there are several leaflets arranged opposite each other on one stem. "Simple" leaf arrangement means one leaf on one stem.
- Female Brazilian pepper trees produce sprays of small yellowish-white flowers in spring, followed by clusters of small red berries in late fall.

How to identify a Brazillian Pepper



You Can Help:

- Pass the word about harmful invasive plants to others.
- Learn to identify Brazilian peppers. Help with voluntary Brazilian pepper events scheduled by local environmental groups and colleges.
- Don't eradicate a plant about which you are not certain. Ask for help.
- Form neighborhood parties to learn effective procedures to get rid of Brazilian peppers, especially from natural preserves and waterfronts. Share the cost of materials with neighbors.
- Brazilian peppers on land that borders water, or is wet at least part of the year, require special handling. These areas are protected by law.
- Learn the names of some other villains in Florida. Just being aware of these names will help in the struggle against bad invasive species:
 - Air potato; Australian pine; Carrotwood; Catclaw mimosa; Chinese tallow ; Cogon grass; Earleaf acacia ; Lather leaf
 - Lead tree; Melaleuca; Schefflera; Skunk vine; Tropical soda apple
- Be careful to avoid invasive species when you select new plants for your garden.
- Learn the use of native plants in landscaping. These provide food and shelter for wildlife, and maintain Florida's unique natural beauty and biological diversity. Once established in suitable habitats, these typically do not need watering. Whenever you see a tiny Brazilian pepper tree, pull it up.

Florida's Harborside Hometown

Brazilian Pepper Beautiful But Bad!



Punta Gorda
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Brazilian Peppers

Brazilian Peppers were brought to Florida in the 1890's for use as ornamental shrubs. People loved them for their fast growth and colorful red berries commonly calling them Florida Hollies. Unfortunately, like many other introduced species, Brazilian Peppers escaped cultivation invading Florida's delicate natural habitats. With a rapid growth habit, prolific reproduction, and the ability to live in a wide array of soil and water conditions Brazilian Pepper has come to dominate upwards of 700,000 acres in South Florida.

Brazilian Peppers disrupt natural habits pushing out native plants and the animals that rely on them. Floridians spend significant amounts of tax dollars to remove this exotic invader from sensitive wetlands, fish spawning waterfronts and nature preserves every year. As this species continues to grow and spread it destroys additional natural resources and consumes ever more taxpayer dollars. That is why it is vital to diligently pursue the removal of this invader from private as well as public lands.

Brazilian Peppers are on the State of Florida's prohibited plant list. It is illegal to transport, sell or cultivate Brazilian Peppers anywhere in the State of Florida

Effects of Brazilian Peppers

- **They kill other vegetation** by forming dense thickets and by chemically suppressing the growth of understory plants.
- **They cut down on kinds and total numbers of wildlife** by destroying their usual food and shelter.
- **They hurt shorelines** by disturbing natural fish-breeding habitat. They crowd out valuable mangroves. Their shallow roots allow erosion.
- **They are members of the same family as poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac.** Any part of the plant can cause skin irritation in some .

Where does it grow?

Unfortunately, Brazilian peppers grow just about anywhere and in all types of soil. This pest plant invades residential and urban landscapes as well as undisturbed areas. In Florida, you can find this plant invading interstate and roadway ditches, power lines, freshwater marshes and mangrove lined shores.

How Brazilian Peppers Grow

- They grow rapidly up to 10 feet per year.
- They resprout if cut down.
- Their roots are difficult to dig up.
- Their prolific seeds are widely distributed by birds and animals.
- They are resistant to natural events like flooding, fire and drought.
- They can grow in wet or dry soil, and are salt-tolerant.
- Florida has no natural predators to keep them under control.

Control Brazilian Peppers on your Property:

The most effective means of controlling Brazilian Pepper is to remove the plant and its roots when the plant is not fruiting. However, sometimes these plants are too large to be safely removed by the property owner and professional assistance is required. Listed below are appropriate Brazilian Pepper control techniques.

- **Hand-pulling:** Pull up roots of Brazilian peppers. Generally, plants with stem diameters of one inch or smaller may be hand pulled. This method does **NOT** require the use of chemicals.
- **Cut-stump:** Plants should be cut as close to the ground as possible. Then apply water-soluble herbicide immediately with a paintbrush or spray bottle to the top surface of the stump. Additional cut-stump and herbicide applications are required if re-sprouts occur.
- **Note:** Herbicide application may require the services of a licensed professional.