

PEST ALERT

Coccinia grandis - Ivy Gourd



What is it?

A rank grower, the vine produces an abundance of leaves, white, star-shaped flowers, and elongated fruits, quickly smothering ground, shrubs, and trees in a solid blanket. Roots and stems are succulent, probably enabling the plants to survive prolonged periods of dry weather. Fruits are 7-8 cm long, and become a scarlet red when ripe.

How does it spread?

Birds are avid feeders on the fruits, and have been implicated in spread of the vine. Its rapid vegetative growth also enables it to quickly climb and smother not only other plants but power poles and other objects in its path.

How do we control Ivy Gourd?

A 1992 exploratory trip to Africa resulted in introduction into Hawaii of five potential control agents: a shoot-boring sesiid moth; three weevils (Curculionidae), one a gall former along lateral and terminal growing vine tips, one a leaf miner, and the third a stem borer causing the death of shoots; and a pentatomid bug. Herbicidal treatment using glyphosate in crop oil applied by notching has also been shown to be effective.



For more information or to report sightings, call 246-0684