

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP



Protect our native ecosystems from invasive species.

Photo: The Nature Conservancy

We need your help in keeping an eye out for invasive species that are currently on Moloka'i. Here is a list of things you can do to help.

1. Clean your shoes, clothes, and bags of unwanted hitchhikers and mud clumps which may carry seeds or plant parts before and after hiking or hunting.
2. If you see a pest while hiking or hunting take note of its location or clearly mark it. If you want to bring back a sample for identification, securely place part of the plant in a sealed container or bag. Do not spread the pest!
3. Call MoMISC if you have seen any of these invasive species on Moloka'i.

MoMISC Mission Statement

To prevent and control introduced
invasive pests from becoming established or
widespread on Moloka'i.

MoMISC Partners

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i

Kalaupapa National Historical Park

Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources

Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife

Moloka'i-Lāna'i Soil and Water Conservation District

USDA - Plant Material Center

USDA - Protective Plant Quarantine

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture
and Human Resources Cooperative Extension Service



MoMISC
Molokai/Maui Invasive Species Committee

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INVASIVE SPECIES CURRENTLY ON MOLOKA'I



Gorse, an invasive plant that was found on Moloka'i, is currently under control and is being monitored for seedlings. (Photo by Forest and Kim Starr)

**Moloka'i is under the constant
threat of invasive species.**

Help "Mālama our 'āina."

Report unusual or invasive species to

MoMISC

(Moloka'i/Maui Invasive Species Committee)

(808) 553-5236 ext. 204

Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia jubata*)

Pampas grass is a giant bunchgrass with white to purple flower plumes. Its narrow leaves have sharp, serrated edges. This plant grows over 13 feet tall.



It forms dense monotypic (dominated by one species) stands and spreads rapidly. Pampas grass can crowd out native plants, damage grazing lands, and creates a fire hazard.

Australian Tree Fern (*Sphaeropteris cooperi*)

Australian tree fern grows up to 40 feet tall, blocking out sunlight with their large fronds, and multiplies quicker than native *hāpu'u*.



This fast growing tree fern invades habitats and becomes a competitor for native tree ferns. They reproduce from spores, which can spread over 7 miles from the parent plant.

Barbados Gooseberry (*Pereskia aculeate*)

Gooseberry is a viny cactus from the West Indies that has thorns. The eye-shaped leaves are dark glossy green and 2-4 inches long. It is covered in clusters of long slender spines (1-2 inches long).



Gooseberry forms a dense canopy that smothers out native vegetation under a solid blanket of vines.

Cat's Claw (*Caesalpinia decapetalia*)

Cat's claw is a woody vine with sharp thorns. Its yellow flowers are 25-30 mm in diameter. The seed pods contain 4-9 black seeds.



Cat's claw has the ability to take over large areas of land. This extremely thorny and aggressive plant climbs on vegetation and smothers the habitat of other plants.

False Awa (*Piper auritum*)

False awa is a term applied to plants that resemble true Kava in appearance but lack certain complex biological chemicals, the Kava lactones, which give Kava its special qualities.



False awa is detrimental to the kava (awa) market. If exported, this invasive plant reduces the value of true "kava". False Awa is very invasive and should not be used like true awa.

Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*)

Giant reed is a tall, sugar cane-like grass. Its hollow stems are 4 inches in diameter like bamboo. The blades are 1-2 inches wide and 1 foot long. Its plume-like inflorescences is 2 feet long, dense, with many flowers. It can grow over 20 feet tall.



Giant reed spreads quickly by root pieces in the dirt and waterways. It forms dense stands that choke out native plants.

Gold Dust Day Gecko (*Phelsuma laticauda*)

Gold dust day geckos came from Madagascar. They are 4-5 inches long. The colors include vivid blues, greens with gold speckles below the neck and on the tail, and reddish ovals in the center of the back and on the nose.



Although beautiful they are not native and can compete for food with native birds.

Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)

Gorse is a spiny shrub from Great Britain. The leaves of the plant are shaped like spines and very sharp. It has small, bright yellow flowers. This plant rapidly grows up to 15 feet in height.



It forms dense monotypic thickets that choke out native vegetation and are impassable by animals or humans. Its seeds remain viable in soils in excess of 30 years.

Long Thorn Kiawe (*Prosopis juliflora*)

Long thorn kiawe is sprawling in nature, has a larger leaf structure and, most notably, thorns up to several inches long which are sharp enough to pierce through automobile tires.



This plant impedes beach access. It can hybridize with common kiawe to form a new plant species.

Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*)

Fountain grass, native to Africa, is a clumping grass that grows up to 3 feet tall with long purple to rose-colored inflorescences



This grass is drought and fire resistant. Its seeds are dispersed by wind, animals, vehicles, and people. It fuels wildfires damaging dry forest plants.

Woodrose (*Merremia tuberosa*)

Woodrose is a climbing vine with brown flowers and toxic yellow fruits.



It is an extremely aggressive vine that can smother tall forest canopies. Its seeds remain viable for years.

Tumbleweed (*Salsola tragus*)

Tumbleweed is a rounded bushy annual. Its height ranges from 0.5 to 3 feet tall.



It tumbles across the landscape, clogging fences and other obstructions. Its seeds are dispersed in motion allowing them to naturalize in dry disturbed areas.

Mexican poppy (*Argemone mexicana*)

Mexican poppy is a fast growing toxic plant. It can grow 2 - 3 feet tall with leaves up to 9 inches long. The leaves are a green-blue color, densely toothed and spiny with very pronounced white veins. It has large yellow to orange flowers that reach up to 2.5 inches in diameter.



Mexican poppy is poisonous to humans and poultry. It grows very readily and quickly from seeds.

New Zealand Flax (*Phoridium tenax*)

Flax has smooth, leathery sword-shaped leaves 3-10 feet long, and 2-5 inches wide. The leaves have a single orange-red mid-vein absent in similar-looking native species. Its red flowers form in clusters along a long narrow stalk from the center of the leaf cluster.



New Zealand Flax grows in dense clumps that crowd out native vegetation. It can grow at high elevations and block out sunlight from native plants.

Rubber Vine (*Cryptostegia madagascariensis*)

Rubber vine can reach 50 feet high growing into tree canopies. The shiny, dark green leaves are 2-4 inches long. Its lilac flowers have broad funnel-shaped tubes and five lobes. The wind-dispersed seeds form triangular pods in wing-like pairs that are 4-5 inches long.



Rubber vine smothers and restricts other plants from growing. It is poisonous when ingested and affects the heart, stomach and intestines of humans and animals. The plant's dust can cause coughing, nose swelling, and eyelid blisters.