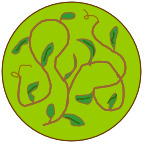




FRIGHTENING FACTS

South Carolina and North Carolina Exotic Plant Pest Councils



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *LYGODIUM MICROPHYLLUM*
COMMON NAME: OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN
NOT YET KNOWN TO OCCUR IN SC OR NC

WHAT IS OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN?

Plant Type: Perennial fern/vine

Form/Size: Twining vine, can climb to more than 90 ft.; Stem is thin, wiry, green, remains green in winter.

Rhizomes dark brown and wiry. Forms dense mats up to 3 ft. thick.

Leaves: Fern fronds opposite, singly compound, oblong outline with thick unlobed leaflets, 2-5 in. long. Underside glabrous.

Flowers: none; sporangia on fertile fronds at margin, leaf tissue folds over sporangia creating a fringed appearance.

Fruit: none; large numbers of tiny spores produced; spores quickly germinate, remain viable for many years, and have a high germination rate.

Means of Spread: Rhizomes and spores. Spores dispersed by wind, water, animals, humans, vehicles, equipment. Year-long vegetative growth and production of fertile fronds.

Family: Lygodiaceae

Similar Species: American Climbing Fern or Hartford Fern (*Lygodium palmatum*). Distinguished by palmately compound fronds with 5-7 finger-like lobes. Occurs in swamps, streambeds and ravines. *Also see Japanese Climbing Fern factsheet.*



WHERE DID OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN COME FROM?

Origin: Africa, Australia, Southeast Asia

Date of Introduction: 1965

Reason: Introduced as a groundcover and naturalized to Florida

WHERE AM I LIKELY TO FIND OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN?

Habitat Type: Wet natural areas; swamps, glades, hammocks, riverbanks. Infestation usually begins at pineland-wetland ecotone.

Distribution in SC and NC: no records



Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species



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WHY IS OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN A PROBLEM?

Environment: -Displaces and smothers native plants reducing diversity and altering wildlife habitat structure.

-dense mats provide abundant ladder fuel for fire resulting in hot crown fires, especially in swamps where fire can spread over water through canopy and kill large trees. Alters fire ecology and natural community composition. Makes management with fire and control of wildfires difficult.

-Mechanical removal methods damage natural communities and wetlands. Chemical methods can kill native plants.

Economy: -Control methods are expensive for landowners, nurseries, and government agencies.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND OLD WORLD CLIMBING FERN?

Report: take a photo, report the observation to EDDMapS: <http://www.se-eppc.org/> (location, size of infestation, etc.). *In SC:* Send digital photo to

Botanist John Nelson at the USC Herbarium: plantman@herbarium.org for verification.

Control: cutting, pulling, and burning will not prevent new growth; chemical treatment required. Flooding will prevent germination but will not kill established plants. Research to find biological controls are ongoing.

Disposal: Pulled material should be bagged prior to transport, and disposed of so as not to spread viable material.



CURRENT LISTINGS:

State Weed Lists: Noxious weed in Florida and Alabama

FL EPPC: Category 1

LEARN MORE!

- Invasive.org (images): <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=3046>
- Natureserve: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/servlet/NatureServe?searchName=Lygodium%20microphyllum>
- Invasiveplants.net: <http://www.invasiveplants.net/biologicalcontrol/10climbingfern.html>
- Florida EPPC: http://www.fleppc.org/Manage_Plans/Lygo_micro_plan.pdf
- Florida EPPC: http://www.fleppc.org/Exotic_Guides/Lygo_control.htm

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Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species