



## ***Miconia (Miconia calvescens)***

- Scientific name & Code** *Miconia calvescens* DC., MICA20  
Synonyms - none
- Family:** Melastomataceae – Melastome Family
- Duration/Growth Habit:** Perennial Shrub/Tree
- Common names:** English – velvet tree, bush currant, miconia, purple plague, velvetleaf
- Origin:** Central and South America
- Description:** Tall, branched tree to 15 m high. Young Branchlets, inflorescences, and bracts stellate-puberulous. Leaves large, opposite, 17-40+ cm long, 7-15 cm wide, 3-nerved, ovate, velvety, green and shiny on upper surface, purple below. Panicle 20-30 (50) cm long with paired primary branches with many 5-merous, sessile, white-petaled flowers. Calyx about 3 mm long, petals 2-3 mm long.
- Propagation:** Prolific seed producer. Spread by wind, water, birds, and other animals.
- Distribution:** Identified in Hawaii (Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Maui, O'ahu)
- Habitat/Ecology:** Invasive tree of forests, forest edges, and grasslands. Common to riparian habitats and humid thickets from lowland to montane tropical forests from sea level to 5000 foot elevations. Reproduces even in dense shade.
- Environmental impact:** Highly invasive tree of mesic and wet forests (>60 inches of rain/year). A single plant can produce over 1 million seeds that are spread by birds, or in soil on shoes, equipment, or hooves of animals..Shade tolerant and fast growing, forms dense stands with heavy shade that replace native species, alter habitats, and contributes to soil erosion (the weak root system does not hold soil well and dense canopy prevents the establishment of a herbaceous ground cover).
- Management:** Physical – Smaller saplings can be dug out by hand.  
Chemical – Sensitive to triclopyr ester in foliar applications to cut surfaces and as basal bark treatments, and also to glyphosate applied to cut surfaces.  
Biological –Two fungal pathogens are available as bio agents. *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* f. sp. *miconae* has been released and is under evaluation. *Coccolliella myconae* produces large wart-like growths that deform leaves. Other potential fungal agents include a tar spot disease (*Guignardia* sp.) and a leaf blight (*Kuronomyces* sp.)

**PIER Risk Assessment: High Risk, score: 14**



a) *Miconia* Leaves and flowers



b) Almost pure stand of *Miconia* – trees will eventually be displaced



c) *Miconia* leaves - upper surface



d) *Miconia* leaves – lower surface



e) *Miconia* habit

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**For More Information:**

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