

# MARCO'S MOST UNWANTED TREES

AGGRESSIVE



INVASIVE



DESTRUCTIVE

WANTED FOR: UPROOTING INFRASTRUCTURE, SMOTHERING NATIVE PLANTS, FUELING WILDFIRES, CREATING STORM HAZARDS

**TOXIC**



**BRAZILIAN PEPPER**

SCHINUS TEREBINTHIFOLIA

**Bio:** An evergreen tree/shrub with dense foliage and bright red berries. Native to South America.  
**Why Unwanted:** One of Florida's most aggressive invaders. Forms dense thickets, displaces native plants, and causes skin and respiratory irritation in humans. Nearly impossible to control once established.



**PUNK TREE**

MELALEUCA QUINQUENERVIA

**Bio:** Tall, white-barked tree native to Australia, known for its spongy bark and bottlebrush-like flowers.  
**Why Unwanted:** Rapid seeder and water hog. Destroys wetlands, increases fire risk, and is nearly impossible to remove due to extensive root systems.

**FIRE HAZARDS**



**AUSTRALIAN PINE**

CASUARINA SPP

**Bio:** Evergreen tree with slender "needlelike" branchlets (tiny scale leaves) and rough, peeling bark.  
**Why Unwanted:** Alters native plant communities by displacing native species. Its seeds (tiny 1-seeded nutlets) spread and establish, forming dense monocultures.



**DOWNY ROSE-MYRTLE**

RHODOMYRTUS TOMENTOSUS

**Bio:** A fast-growing, evergreen shrub or small tree with fragrant pink flowers and dense foliage.  
**Why Unwanted:** Forms impenetrable thickets, shades out native plants, and disrupts fire cycles. Its seeds are spread widely by birds, making control extremely difficult. Prohibited under Marco Island Ordinance #98-19.



**BISHOPWOOD**

BISCHOFIA JAVANICA

**Bio:** Evergreen or semi-evergreen tree with shiny trifoliate leaves and milky sap.  
**Why Unwanted:** Produces abundant bird-dispersed berries. Invades hammocks and wetlands, displacing native plants and altering forest structure.



**EARLEAF ACACIA**

ACACIA AURICULIFORMIS

**Bio:** Medium-sized ornamental tree from northern Australia and Asia with yellow flower spikes and curved seed pods.  
**Why Unwanted:** Produces dense shade, displaces native shrubs, and spreads aggressively by seed and root suckers.



**SURINAM CHERRY**

EUGENIA UNIFLORA

**Bio:** Evergreen shrub or small tree (to ~30 ft) with opposite, glossy leaves and orange-red ribbed fruits.  
**Why Unwanted:** It invades hammocks and natural areas, forming dense thickets that displace native plants and prevent regeneration.



**GUAVA/STRAWBERRY GUAVA**

PSIDIUM GUAJAVA/PSIDIUM CATTLEIANUM

**Bio:** Shrub or small tree with opposite, glossy leaves and pale fruit (yellow or red berries) containing many seeds.  
**Why Unwanted:** Aggressive suckering + seed spread by animals. Forms dense thickets that crowd out native plants in forests and woodlands.



**SAPODILLA**

MANILKARA ZAPOTA

**Bio:** Evergreen with clusters of alternate leaves and brown, rough fruits containing hard black seeds.  
**Why Unwanted:** Escaped cultivation in South Florida. Animals eat and spread the fruit. Large trees shade out natives; seedlings form dense patches that block understory growth.

**TOXIC**



**CARROTWOOD**

CUPANIOPSIS ANACARDIODES

**Bio:** A medium-sized ornamental tree with glossy leaves and bright orange seed pods.  
**Why Unwanted:** Spreads prolifically via bird-dispersed seeds. Invades coastal forests and hardwood hammocks. Disrupts natural succession and native regeneration. Illegal to plant under Marco Ordinance #98-19.



**CAMPHORA**

CINNAMOMUM CAMPHORA

**Bio:** Evergreen tree from eastern Asia with glossy, aromatic leaves and small black fruits.  
**Why Unwanted:** Produces up to 100,000 seeds annually, spread widely by birds and other animals. Invades disturbed areas, hammocks, and floodplains, forming dense stands that displace native species



**DISHONORABLE MENTIONS**

OTHER INVASIVE TREES FOUND IN FLORIDA, ALSO HARMFUL TO NATIVE HABITATS.

Ficus microcarpa - Laurel fig  
Albizia julibrissin - Mimosa tree  
Albizia lebeck - Woman's tongue  
Bauhinia variegata - Orchid tree  
Calophyllum antillanum - Santa Maria  
Koelreuteria elegans - Golden rain  
Leucaena leucocephala - Lead tree  
Syzgium cumini - Java plum  
Syzgium jambos - Rose apple  
Triadica sebifera - Chinese tallow

THERE'S MORE CULPRITS OUT THERE! SEE OUR POSTER ON OTHER PLANTS

TREES LISTED IN **RED** ARE PROHIBITED BY LAW IN FLORIDA OR UNDER MARCO ISLAND ORDINANCE #98-19. POSSESSION, SALE, TRANSPORT, OR PLANTING OF THESE SPECIES IS ILLEGAL. OTHER SPECIES SHOWN ARE NOT BANNED BY LAW BUT ARE CLASSIFIED AS **CATEGORY 1 INVASIVES** BY THE FLORIDA INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL DUE TO THEIR **SEVERE ECOLOGICAL IMPACT**. ALL DISPLACE NATIVE PLANTS, ALTER HABITATS, AND REDUCE BIODIVERSITY.

PLANT NATIVE ALTERNATIVES INSTEAD. LEARN MORE BY SCANNING THE QR-CODE