

Pacific Pests, Pathogens and Weeds - Online edition

Ivy gourd (495)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu.
- Aggressive, fast-growing vine, smothers crops (e.g., sugarcane) and native vegetation, including shrubs, small trees. Common in abandoned gardens, wastelands, roadsides. Environmental weed preventing regeneration of native plants, and impacting diversity. Indirect impacts: host of several important insect pests (cucumber moth, pumpkin beetle, melon fly, aphids, bugs, leafminers, whiteflies).
- Long vines from tuberous roots. Leaves alternate, heart-shaped to 5-lobed, hairy below. Tendrils assist climbing. Separate male and female plants; flowers on stalks up to 5cm, white, five lobes; fruits, smooth, red with brown seeds.
- Spread: tuberous roots and stem pieces; seeds by birds, rodents, possibly pigs. Long distance, medicinal and culinary uses.
- Biosecurity: note, a medicine and a food.
- Biocontrol: stem-boring moth (*Melittia oedipus*) and leaf-mining beetle (*Acythopeus cocciniae*) released.
- Cultural control: hand-pulling, removing underground storage roots, collecting and burning stem pieces. Avoid slashing, unless all stem pieces collected.
- Chemical control: in Australia, 2,4-D; 2,4-D + picloram; dicamba; MCPA; triclopyr; triclopyr + picloram; triclopyr + picloram + aminopyralid. Glyphosate, elsewhere.

Common Name

Ivy gourd. It is also known as the scarlet-fruited gourd, little gourd, scarlet gourd.

Scientific Name

Coccinia grandis; previously, it was known as *Bryonia grandis*, *Coccinia cordifolia*. It is a member of the Cucurbitaceae.



Photo 5. Male flower, ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis*.



Photo 4. Leaf and young (green) fruit, ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis*.



Photo 1. Ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis*, growing over vegetation and a building (Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands).



Photo 2. Dense cover of ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis* (Hawaii).



Photo 3. Dense cover of ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis* (Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia).



Photo 6. Mature (red) fruit, ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis*. Note, twining tendril in the background.



Photo 7. Mature (red) fruit, ivy gourd, *Coccinia grandis*. Note, size and shape of leaf. A tendril can be seen to the right of the fruit (Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia)

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Information from CABI (2019) *Coccinia grandis* (scarlet-fruited ivy gourd). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/14659>); and *Coccinia grandis* (2013) Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER). (http://www.hear.org/pier/species/coccinia_grandis.htm); and from Ivy Gourd (*Coccinia grandis*) (2011) Invasive Species Fact Sheet 05. Pacific Islands Area. USDA NRCS. (https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs142p2_037095.pdf). Photo 1 Mingus 19. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Invasive_Ivy_Gourd.jpg). Photos 2&5 Forrest & Kim Starr Starr Environmental, Bugwood.org. Photo 4 Jaiprakashsing. Young fruit of *Coccinia grandis*. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Young_Coccinia_grandis.jpg). Photo 6 Abdullah AL Shohag. (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/189060791@N03/50318670331/in/dateposted/>). Photos 3&7 Konrad Englburger, Pohnpei, Federated states of Micronesia.

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