

Air yam

Dioscorea bulbifera

Description

Introduced from Africa for food and medicinal properties in the early 1900s.

Habit

Herbaceous, twining vine that can reach lengths of 60 feet or more.

Leaves

Alternate, 8 inches long, broadly heart-shaped, prominent veins.

Stems

Rounded, thin, wiry.

Flowers

This plant rarely flowers. Inconspicuous, arising from leaf axils in panicles that are about 4 inches long.

Fruits and Seeds

Aerial, potato-like tubers that grow at the leaf axils. Seeds are partially winged.

Habitat



Vengolis, Wikimedia Commons



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Native to Asia. Can be found in forest edges and disturbed sites.

Reproduction

By potato-like tubers (bulbils).

Similar

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Cut vines, remove bulbils and remove any underground tubers. Burning is not recommended. Mowing may be effective but may also spread bulbils. Biological control using the air potato leaf beetle (*Lilioceris cheni*) has shown to be effective. Can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate but will not work on bulbils.

Credits

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