



Latherleaf, *Columbrina asiatica*

Native Range: Coastal areas from Eastern Africa to India, Southeast Asia, tropical Australia and Pacific Islands, including Hawaii

Description: A sprawling bush with creeping branches. The dark green leaves are shiny and oval with toothed margins. Flowers are small and greenish-white. Fruit is a green or light orange color that ripens to brown. Latherleaf seeds are dispersed by tides and storms.

Background: Brought from Asia to Jamaica by immigrants in the 1850's. Seeds from escaped cultivation are thought to have floated on ocean currents from the Caribbean to Florida.



Ecological Threat: Invades coastal beaches and dunes, mangrove estuaries, pine and hardwood forests, and disturbed sites.

Latherleaf's expansive growth can smother native vegetation and form a monoculture if left uncontrolled.



Management Options: Uprooting the young, shallow-rooted plants, cutting stems, and applying herbicides has proven effective.

Warning! Use chemicals wisely. Always read labels carefully and follow all instructions, especially those regarding the use of protective gear and clothing.