



Old World Climbing Fern, *Lygodium microphyllum*

Native Range: Australia, Africa, and tropical Asia

Description: Intertwining vine with thin, dark brown, threadlike roots. Green leaflets have a triangular shape. The leafy branches that grow off the main stem can be 2 to 5 inches long. This plant has two types of leaves; one with a simple outline and the other more complex with spores that are spread by the wind.



Background: Introduced to Florida in the 1960's as an ornamental landscape plant.

Ecological Threat: Climbing ferns invade a variety of native Florida habitats from pine forests to cypress swamps. They form dense concentrations that can blanket and eventually smother large areas. Their dense root systems can change the water flow through streams and wetlands. This plant can also change fire ecology by serving as a ladder that carries the fire directly to the canopy of the forest or by providing fuel for a fire in a wetland area that normally would not burn.



Management Options: Killed back by fire, but not eliminated. Herbicide application is most effective.