

Lygodium microphyllum Old World climbing fern



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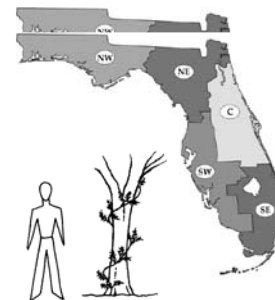
Appearance: Fern with dark brown, wiry rhizomes and climbing, twining fronds of indeterminate growth, to 30m (90 ft) long; main rachis (leaf stalk above petiole) wiry, stemlike.

Leaves: Leafy branches off main rachis (constituting the pinnae) are once compound, oblongish in overall outline, 5-12 cm (2-5 in) long. Leaflets (pinnules) usually unlobed, stalked, articulate (leaving wiry stalks when detached); leaf-blade tissue usually glabrous below; fertile leaflets of similar size, fringed with tiny lobes of enrolled leaf tissue covering the sporangia along the leaf margin.

Spores: Sporangia on the margins of the fertile part of the leaf (pinnule). Can germinate in 6-7 days; 5-month-old spores can have 80% germination rate. Wind- and water-dispersed.

Ecological threat:

Blankets entire tree islands and even climbs over sawgrass in standing water. Poses management problems for both wildfires and prescribed burns because growth into canopy creates an avenue for fire to spread. FLEPPC Category I



Distribution: NW, NE, C, SW, SE

Field Notations

LYGOMICR/LYMI