UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Caesarweed

Urena lobata (L.) Malvaceae

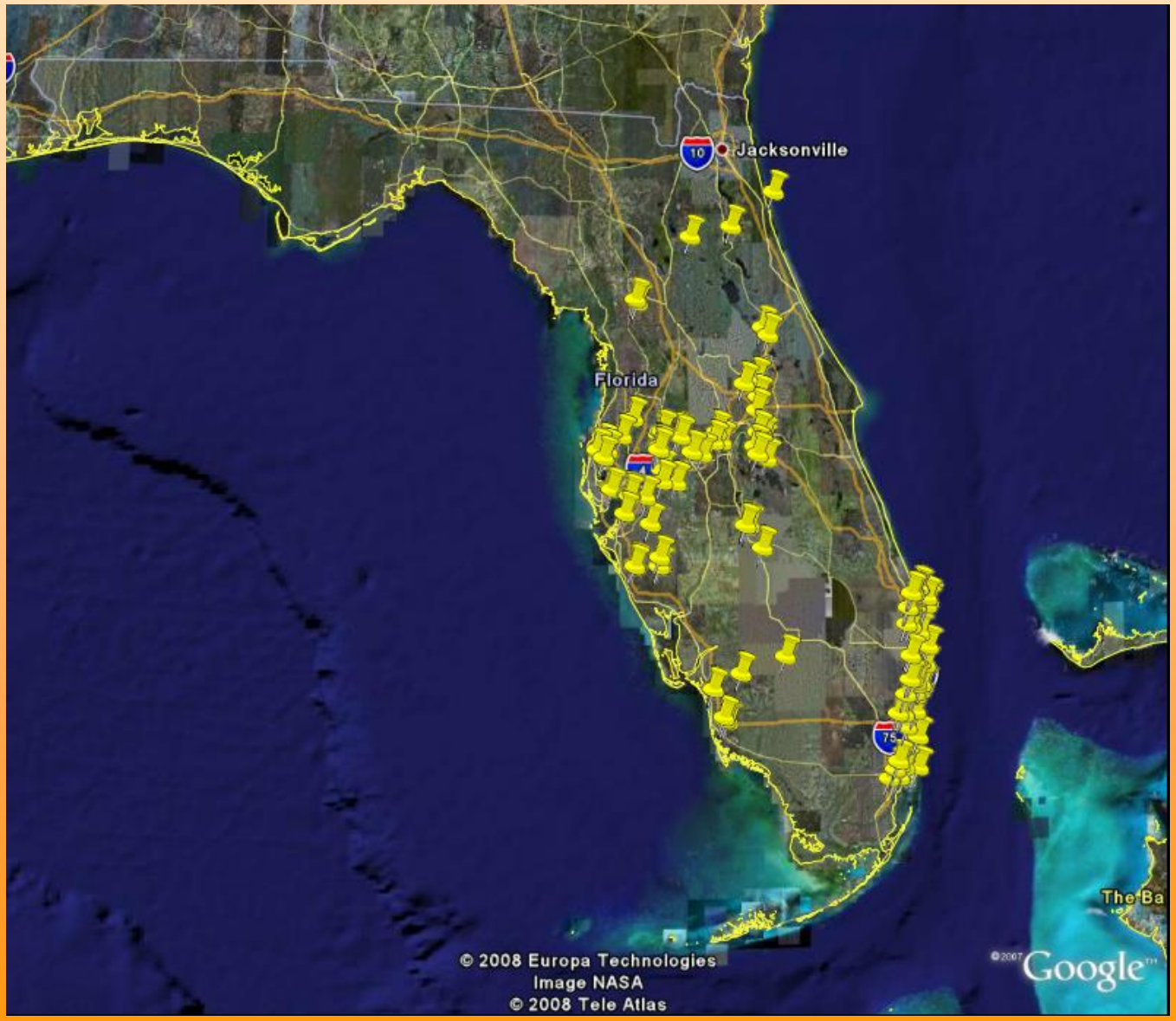
Biology

- Native to central/south America
- Accidentally introduced (unknown)
- Tolerant to salinity and drought
- Mallow plant family – similar to cotton, sida, and hibiscus
- Annual species in central Florida, short-lived perennial in south

Distribution & Impacts

- Found in central and south Florida
- Associated with disturbed sites, pastures, roadsides and perennial crop plantations
- Competes with forage species and desirable native plants

Caesarweed Distribution in Florida



Identification

Mature Plant

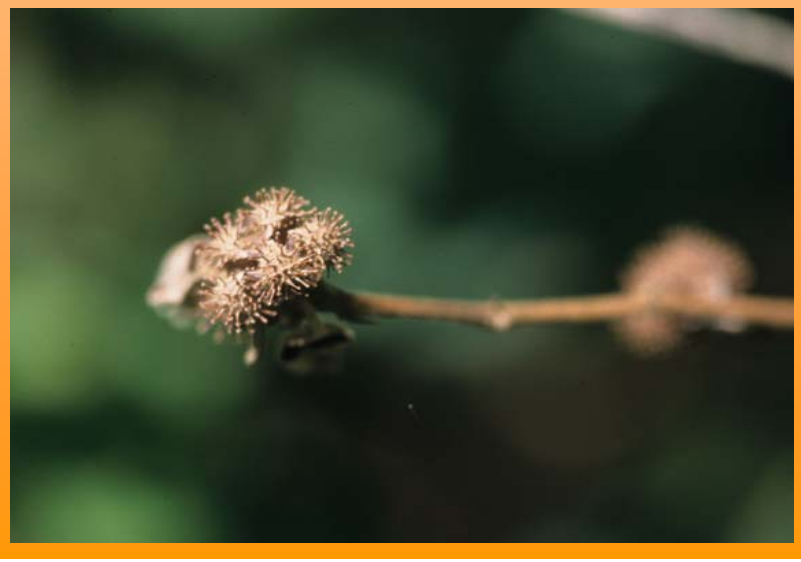
- Erect herbaceous shrub, 7-10 feet tall
- Freely branching, bushy appearance

Leaves

- Leaves are arranged alternately
- 2 to 4 inches long
- Palmately lobed
- Pubescent with stellate hairs

Flowers and Fruit

- Flowers borne in axillary clusters
- Pinkish-violet
- Fruit are pubescent with hooked bristles or barbs
- Cling to clothing and fur



Management

Preventative

Cultural

Mechanical

Biological

Chemical

Preventative

1. Remove existing plants before seeds are produced
2. Rouge plants from fencerows, ditchbanks – prevent seed spread into clean areas
3. Avoid treatments or cattle grazing during fruit set – spread seed

Cultural

1. Shade will deter growth and limit seedling establishment
2. Mulches or a good ground cover will prevent seed germination and seedling development

Biological

1. There are no known biological control agents available for caesarweed management in Florida or the southeastern U.S.

Mechanical

1. Hand pull plants, small infestations
2. Mowing or cutting is effective, but larger plants may resprout
3. Cultivation or other tillage is very effective, but not a viable option in many areas

Chemical

1. Limited research in this area
2. Over-the-top applications of triclopyr or other pasture herbicides at 1 to 2% solution plus 0.25% surfactant
3. Apply in spring, prior to flowering and fruit development

Useful Links

- Floridata Homepage: http://www.floridata.com/main_fr.cfm?state=Welcome&viewsrc=welcome.htm
- University of Florida Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants: http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/welcome.html
- The Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group. Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas: http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/index.htm

Useful Links

- Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER). Plant Threats to Pacific Ecosystems: http://www.hear.org/pier/threats.htm
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Plants Database: http://plants.usda.gov

Literature Cited

Langeland, K.A. and K. Craddock Burks. 1998. Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. IFAS Publication SP 257. University of Florida, Gainesville. 165 pp