

Hedychium coronarium

White ginger

Hedychium coronarium J. Koenig

Family: Zingiberaceae

Description: Fleshy creeping herb with leafy stems and thick fleshy rhizomes, over 6 ft tall. Leaves to 2 ft long by 4 inches wide. Fragrant white flowers in terminal inflorescence. Blooms July–October peaking in August–September. Aerial stems die back in February but resprout at the same time. [*H. flavescens* N. Carey ex Roscoe, yellow ginger, similar in appearance, also produces fragrant but yellow flowers in late summer and early fall, same time as the white ginger⁽⁵⁹⁾. *H. gardnerianum* Ker-Gawl, kahili ginger, has yellow flowers with orange floral parts in larger cylindrical, terminal, upright inflorescence, reminiscent of the kahili of the Hawaiian royalty. Naturalized on Kaua‘i, Maui, Lana‘i, and Hawai‘i.] Greek: *hedys*, sweet; *chion*, snow; *coronarium*, crown; *flavescens*, yellow^(59, 69, 70).

Distribution: Both white and yellow gingers are native to India, the kahili ginger to the Himalayas. All occur in mesic to wet areas on Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lana‘i, and Hawai‘i. Introduced in 19th century by Chinese immigrants as an ornamental⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Environmental impact: Creeping growth overwhelms low-growing plants in pastures and forests.

Management: Fleshy rhizomes make mechanical control arduous. Alton Arakaki (Univ. Hawai‘i) and Ed Misaki (TNC) discovered that yellow ginger was extremely sensitive to metsulfuron at 3% (w/vol) at Kamakou Preserve, Moloka‘i. HAVO staff reported control by cutting off yellow ginger foliage followed by application of metsulfuron on exposed rhizomes at 0.017 oz/qt (0.5 g/liter) of water in spring and summer or 0.12 oz/qt (3.5 g/liter) of water in winter. White ginger was sensitive to foliar applications of 1 lb/acre picloram, very sensitive to metsulfuron (0.25 oz/acre), moderately susceptible to triclopyr⁽⁵⁴⁾. Unpublished research by Greg



Hedychium flavescens
yellow ginger



Hedychium gardnerianum
kahili ginger

Santos, Linda Pratt, and Chuck Stone at HAVO found that metsulfuron at 0.04 lb/acre, imazapyr at 0.7 lb/acre, and amitrol at 0.7 lb/acre applied to visible rhizomes after mechanical clearing of top growth was very effective on Kahili ginger. A commercial mixture of 2,4-D + triclopyr was ineffective. Pat Bily (TNC) reported 20% triclopyr ester product applied in straight stream to kahili ginger stems and surface rhizomes provided 100% kill on Maui.