

## Clidemia hirta

### Koster's curse

*Clidemia hirta* (L.) D. Don

Family: Melastomataceae

**Description:** Branched shrub to 9 ft tall, hairy. Leaves ovate, 6 inches long by 3 inches wide with 5–7 prominent veins with distinct lateral veins between giving a checked appearance, margins with fine hairs, somewhat scalloped or toothed. Flowers small, white, in clusters. Berries 0.3 inches long, black, fleshy, 4-celled. Seeds very small, many. Genus named after *Clidemia*, an ancient Greek botanist; *hirsute*, coarse hairs<sup>(5, 70)</sup>.



**Distribution:** Of tropical American origin, now widely dispersed throughout the Old World tropics, including Australia. Weed in pastures and especially forests on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i<sup>(26, 70)</sup>.

**Environmental impact:** Shade tolerant, dominates understory in humid and mesic forests.

**Management:** Birds spread the seeds. For biological control, HDOA, DOFAW, and the University of Hawai'i are monitoring the fungus *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*. HDOA and DOFAW are testing *Lius poseidon*, a beetle, and moths *Antiblemma acclinalis*, *Carposina bullata*, and *Mompha trithalama*. Triclopyr amine at

1–2% product in water in foliar application was effective at Kipahulu, Maui (Haleakala National Park). A 50% triclopyr amine application to cut stump was effective at 1 month in a trial at Ha'ena, Kaua'i (Limahuli Gardens). Thinline basal bark application of triclopyr ester was effective on plants 7–9 ft tall at Kipahulu Valley, Maui (Haleakala National Park). Triclopyr ester at 2 lb/acre effective, especially with 0.5% crop oil (Univ. Hawai'i). Drizzle applications of glyphosate and of triclopyr were ineffective (Univ. Hawai'i), but Pat Thile, DOFAW, reported good results with drizzle applications of triclopyr in oil on recovering clidemia that had been previously cut back.