**Koa haole, ekoa**

*Leucaena leucocephalla*  
(Lam.) de Wit

**Family: Fabaceae**

**Description:** Erect, woody shrub to 20 ft tall. Leaves bi-pinnately compound, up to 8 pairs of secondary leaf stems, each with up to 21 pairs of leaflets, leaflets 0.5 inches long. Flower head spherical, hard when green, matures into a fuzzy, creamy white, pom-pom type head. Flat green pods emerge from the flower heads, 7 inches long by 0.8 inches wide, becoming dark brown when mature. Dark brown seeds used in making *lei*. A great deal of interest in this nitrogen-fixing plant in developing countries as forage for cattle, feed for chickens, green manure for cropping, and firewood. *Leucanthis* means white flowered; *leucocephallus*, white headed, both names referring to its inflorescence.(5, 70).

**Distribution:** Native to tropical America. Common throughout Hawai‘i and Midway in dry to moist areas. First collected on O‘ahu and Kaua‘i in 1837(70).

**Environmental impact:** Can be toxic to horses because of mimosine content, which cattle can tolerate somewhat(29). Forms dense stands in dry to mesic pastures and forests. Becomes too tall in pastures for livestock to reach the leaves. At times severely defoliated by an accidentally introduced psyllid, *Heteropsylla cubana*.

**Management:** Good forage in dry pastures but its toxicity somewhat of a problem and it grows out of reach of livestock and shades out the understory. Sensitive to foliar-applied triclopyr. Susceptible to soil-applied tebuthiuron at 2 lb/acre(48) and to cut-surface applications of picloram. Dicamba ineffective in cut-surface applications. Triclopyr ester applied basal bark and stump bark effective; 2,4-D in diesel and sometimes diesel alone effective in basal bark treatments. Goats will control koa haole (An Peischel).