

Melaleuca quinquenervia

Paperbark

Melaleuca quinquenervia (Cav.) S.T. Blake
Syn. *M. leucodendron*

Family: Myrtaceae

Description: Tall tree, 75 ft, bark tan, thick, spongy, peels in papery layers, a popular ornamental. Leaves alternate, narrow, 3.5 inches long by 0.6 inches wide with 3–5 prominent veins. Flowers cream colored in cylindrical “bottlebrush” spikes. Fruits woody, cup-shaped. *Melaleuca* after *mela*, black, and *leukas*, white, after black trunks and white branches of a different species of this genus; *quinquenervia*, the 5 nerves (veins) of the leaves⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Distribution: Native to Australia, New Caledonia, and New Guinea. Planted in forests of Hawai‘i, now naturalized in mesic forests of Hawai‘i on all the main islands⁽⁷⁰⁾. Also a serious pest in the Florida Everglades⁽⁶³⁾.

Environmental impact: Spreading from original plantings in forests. Introduced into Florida to dry swamps and there it forms thick stands. Pollen can cause respiratory distress and sap can cause blisters and rash⁽⁷⁵⁾.

Management: Frilling or cut-stump applications of imazapyr effective⁽⁶³⁾. In applications to drilled holes, glyphosate was very effective, dicamba and triclopyr fairly effective, and 2,4-D ineffective. Saplings sensitive to foliar application of triclopyr at 1 lb/acre.

