Psidium cattleianum

Strawberry guava, waiawi ‘ula-‘ula

Psidium cattleianum Sabine

Family: Myrtaceae

Description: Tall shrub or tree to 20 ft. Bark smooth, reddish, mottled, peeling. Leaves opposite, ovate, size variable, to 5 inches long by 2.5 inches wide, aromatic, leathery, shiny, lateral veins not prominent. Flowers, usually 1, in leaf axils, white with many stamens. Fruits 1 inch diameter, red with white pulp; used in making fruit drinks and jams. Seeds small, hard, many, tan color. *P. cattleianum* f. *lucidum* is a narrow tree with yellow fruit. *P. c.* var. *littorale* is a substantial tree with yellow fruit. Name derived from the Greek *sidion* for “little poma-granate”[70]; c*attleianum*, after William Cattley, 19th century English botanist[69]; *lucidum*, shining (leaves); *littorale*, seashore, probably where discovered.

Distribution: Originally from tropical America, now found throughout the tropics. Probably introduced into Hawai‘i in 1825 and widely distributed in mesic to high-rainfall areas[70]. Seed spread by pigs and birds. Seeds have high rate of germination but short viability[27].

Environmental impact: Tolerates shade, prolific seeder. Forms dense stands in pastures and forests, is reportedly allelopathic (suppressive)[70]. A serious pest of pastures and probably the most severe weed in rain forests. Fruit hosts fruit flies.

Management: Strawberry guava is sensitive to foliar, frill, and cut-surface applications of triclopyr, dicamba, and 2,4-D, in descending order of efficacy. Glyphosate was ineffective over the long term, although early defoliation was severe. Strawberry guava was also sensitive to basal bark applications of 2,4-D, picloram, and triclopyr. Where applications were made during dry days, conventional basal bark applications of triclopyr ester at 2% and 2,4-D ester at 4% of respective products were effective at Kōke‘e. Thin line applications of triclopyr ester, 20% product in diesel or crop oil, were effective[56]. Thin line vertical applications to opposite sides of stems to 5 inches diameter was also effective. HAVO staff controlled strawberry guava with triclopyr amine at 50% product in water applied to cut stumps or frills (Chris Zimmer, HAVO). Responses to soil applications of tebuthiuron and hexazinone were erratic, excellent to poor.

P. cattleianum f. *lucidum*