

# Rhizophora mangle

## American mangrove, red mangrove

*Rhizophora mangle* L.

Family: Rhizophoraceae

**Description:** Tree to 30 ft tall, with stilt roots. Leaves ovate, thick, leathery, 6 inches long by 3 inches wide, ovate. Flowers 0.5 inches diameter, in clusters of 2 or 3, pale yellow. Fruit greenish brown, pendant, single seed, germinating in fruit. Greek *rhizo*, root; *pherein*, to bear, for stilt roots or fruit with root emerged; *mangle*, for impenetrable thickets formed by this plant<sup>(70)</sup>.

**Distribution:** Native to Florida, the Caribbean, and South America. Introduced in 1902 to stabilize mud flats on southwest Moloka'i shore. Spread by seeds floating with the tides. Now also occurs in salt marshes, streams, and beaches on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Lana'i, and Hawai'i<sup>(70)</sup>.

**Environmental impact:** Blocks canals and streams, heightens flood risk, changes ecology of the coastal environment. Damages coastal infrastructures.

**Management:** Difficult because of lack of herbicides with marine labels. Glyphosate formulations with marsh or estuary labels can be used in those sites; cut-surface application is effective. Mechanical topping below the low tide water line reportedly kills it (Glenn Teves, Univ. Hawai'i). Mangrove not in standing water may be controlled with 20% triclopyr ester in oil applied to basal bark. Research on chemical methods in marshes and estuaries and mechanical methods to determine highest cut level would be useful.

