



# A Guide to

# Air Potato

(*Dioscorea bulbifera*)



## How Can I Control Air Potato? (Continued)

Triclopyr products, such as Brush-B-Gon®, and glyphosate products, such as Roundup® and Rodeo® (labeled for aquatic areas), are available in local garden and hardware stores. Always

use herbicides according to the label. Remember: The label is the law!

For more information on invasive species:  
<http://www.floridainvasives.org/>

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# A Guide to Air Potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)

## An Invasive Plant Species

### Description:

Air potato is an invasive vine in Florida, consisting of large, green, heart-shaped leaves. It can quickly grow 60-70 feet in length, which is long enough to blanket even the tallest trees like those found in hardwood hammocks. As a member of the yam family, air potato produces large numbers of aerial tubers (potato-like growths attached to the stem) that can grow into new stems.



### Impacts of Air Potato:

- Is a non-native, exotic plant (from tropical Asia, Africa) without native insects or diseases to keep its growth in check
- Disrupts native plant communities by forming impenetrable vines on native trees and shading out understory vegetation
- Negatively impacts wildlife dependent on native vegetation for forage, nesting, and cover
- Interferes with ecosystem integrity by threatening biodiversity and ecosystem stability in natural areas.



### Why Should I Be Concerned?

- Invasive species cost Floridians more than \$500 million each year; the state spends more than \$50 million annually just to manage exotic weeds from our fields, pastures, canals, ponds, lakes, rivers and natural areas. And the economic costs are small potatoes compared to the ecological ones. (Florida Invaders Publication, 2008)
- Invasive species are one of the leading causes of extinction.

### How Can I Control Air Potato?

- Hand pull or disconnect vine-stems to prevent aerial “potato” production; every “potato” is a potential new plant.
- Dig up under-ground tubers or germinating “potatoes.” Place them in a black plastic bag until they have degraded and place in regular, not yard, trash.
- Continue to hand pull sprouting vines to deplete the food reserves of germinated “potatoes.”
- If aerial “potatoes” have already formed, hand pick and place them in a black plastic bag until they have degraded.
- Herbicides can be used, according to label directions, to treat the vines by either spraying the leaves directly or cutting the vine near the ground and spraying the remaining stem.



*(See back for more information)*