

JASMINUM FLUMINENSE VELL.

Oleaceae/Olive family

Common Name: Brazilian jasmine, Azores jasmine
Synonymy: *Jasminum bahiense* DC.; *J. azoricum* L. misapplied
Origin: Tropical west Africa

Botanical Description: Evergreen, climbing, woody vine, with young stems densely hairy and mature stems glabrous. Leaves opposite, trifoliolate, leaf and leaflets stalked; terminal leaflet larger, to 7 cm (4 in) long, with a stalk to 5 cm (2 in) long; leaflets broadly ovate, pubescent above and below, with pointed tips. Flowers white, quite fragrant, opening at night, in broad, branched clusters at leaf axils; petals fused into a narrow, slightly curved tube to 2.5 cm (1 in) long, with 5-7 terminal lobes shorter than the tube, spreading in star-shaped fashion. Fruit a small, fleshy, roundish, black, 2-lobed berry.

Ecological Significance: Introduced into Florida for ornament in the early 1920s; first described from Brazil, but actually introduced there from Africa by Portuguese explorers (Hammer 1996). Commonly escaped and weedy by 1960s (Lakela and Craighead 1965, Long and Lakela 1971, Morton 1974). Abounds on fences, power poles, hedges, and other disturbed sites (Morton 1976). Has spread extensively and become a major pest, in Florida and in Puerto Rico (Morton 1974). Self-sowing and weedy in cultivated landscapes (Broschat and Meerow 1991). An aggressive, troublesome, difficult-to-control weed (Nelson 1996). Has vigorously invaded intact, undisturbed hardwood forests in south Florida; can climb high into the tree canopy of mature forests, completely enshrouding native vegetation and reducing native plant diversity (Hammer 1996). Reported from 11 natural areas, including rare scrub habitat, in Dade and Palm Beach counties (EPPC 1996).

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Flowers

Distribution: One of 7 species of non-native jasmines naturalized in Florida. Naturalized populations of *J. fluminense* documented by herbarium specimens from Dade, Monroe, St. Lucie, and Highlands counties (Wunderlin *et al.* 1996). Listed as a common weed in Puerto Rico and as a weed in the Dominican Republic (Holm *et al.* 1979). Noted as locally common in Jamaica (Adams 1972). Naturalized in the Bahamas as well, and elsewhere in the New World tropics and subtropics (Correll and Correll 1982).

Life History: Restricted to areas with average minimum temperatures above 1.7°C (35°F) (Broschat and Meerow 1991). Easy to grow; propagated in cultivation from cuttings; may not tolerate soggy root zones (Chabot 1952). Will grow near coasts where protected from salt spray (Menninger 1964). Flowers all year, most abundantly in spring; ripe fruit found from early summer into early winter (Hammer 1996). Seeds dispersed by birds and raccoons, with dense plots of seedlings often seen arising from raccoon droppings (Hammer 1996).

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Compound leaves

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Along roadside near Homestead