

Botanic name : *Antigonon leptopus* Hook. & Arn. -- Bot. Beechey Voy. 308, t. 69. 1838 [Dec 1838] (IK)

Common name : Coral Vine, Honolulu Creeper, Chain-of-love, coral creeper

Family : Polygonaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Native to Central America, Mexico, Hawaii; introduced in India, Australia, Tonga, Puerto Rico. As an invasive vine, it is included in the Global Compendium of Weeds and classified as one of the most aggressive weeds occurring in tropical and insular ecosystems. Due to its capacity to reproduce sexually by seeds and vegetatively by stems and underground tubers, the plant can modify and collapse native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures, and altering ecological functions by smothering native trees, out-competing understory plants, and altering fire regimes. Aggressively invasive in South Africa, Kenya, Cuba, Bahamas, Puerto Rico, Lesser Antilles, and numerous islands in the Pacific including Hawaii, Guam, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Guinea, and Solomon Islands. Tagged as category II invasive weed in Florida, USA

Description : Perennial fast growing evergreen vine; stems climbing with tendril reaching up to 40 ft, pentagonal, with many lateral branches; leaves dark-green, alternate, caudate to sagittate, without ochreate stipule, acute or acuminate at apex, cordiform or truncate at base, crenulate at margins; flowers many, tiny, sepals larger than corolla, delicately pink to deep coral, giving the characteristic color, flowers arranged in axillary racemes or terminal panicles, 10-20 cm long, terminating in a pair of spiral tendrils; perianth 4-7 mm long, of 5 ovate or elliptical tepals, intense pink or white; staminal column 2-3 mm long, of the same color as the tepals; placentation basal; fruit-a 3-angled achene

Phytochemicals: alkaloids, quinines, resins, tannins, fixed oils, flavonoids, fats, saponins phenolic compounds, steroids, phytosterols, triterpenoidal sapogenins, ferulic acid, cinnamic acid, quercetin-3-rhamnoside, kaempferol-3-glucoside, β -sitosterol, β -sitosterol-glucoside, d-mannitol, quercetin, anthraquinones, and coumarins

Medicinal/Economic uses : Anti-thrombin, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, antioxidant and lipid peroxidation inhibitory. Tea prepared from the aerial parts of the vine is used as a remedy for cold and flu-related pain relief (Jamaica, WI). In Philippines, by Ifugao-migrants in the foothills of the Sierra Madre for wound closure, leaves used reduce swelling; tea leaves used for diabetes; blossoms used for high blood pressure. Heart tonic (Trinidad and Tobago), leaves in cough and throat constriction (Sudan). Tubers are edible. Leaves and flowers are cooked and served with vermicelli. In Thailand, leaves and flowers, flour-coated and fried, are served with noodles while flowers are also used in omelets. Cultivated as ornamental but if neglected becomes invasive weed.