

Begonia

***Begonia cucullata* (A. DC) Begoniaceae**



Biology



- Native to India and tropical regions
- Thousands of cultivars developed
- Wax begonia, one of four original species and may be the most popular begonia worldwide
- Under natural conditions will reach 24 inches wide and up to 18 inches tall

Background

Economic Uses

- Extensive use across the U.S. as a bedding or container plant
- Attractive flowers
- Assortment of foliage types



Distribution



- Found throughout much of north and central Florida, west to central panhandle regions
- Also found in Georgia
- Commonly found along roadways, old fields and disturbed areas – including recently harvested timber

Begonia Distribution in Florida



Impacts



- Readily establishes and produces a high quantity of seed – this being the primary dispersal mechanism
- Can also root easily, but only in wet environments

Identification

Plant

- Glossy, succulent leaves with scalloped edges
- White to pink flowers
- Tiny, fine inconspicuous seeds



Management

Preventative

Cultural

Mechanical

Biological

Chemical

Preventative



1. Limit planting as a bedding plant
2. Remove existing plants, including roots before seeds are produced
3. Avoid improper disposal of possibly contaminated soil (potting media) with begonia seeds

Cultural



1. Alternative landscape plants to replace begonia
2. Programs to educate homeowners about the problems associated with begonia

Biological



1. There are no known biological control agents available for begonia management in Florida or the southeastern U.S.

Mechanical

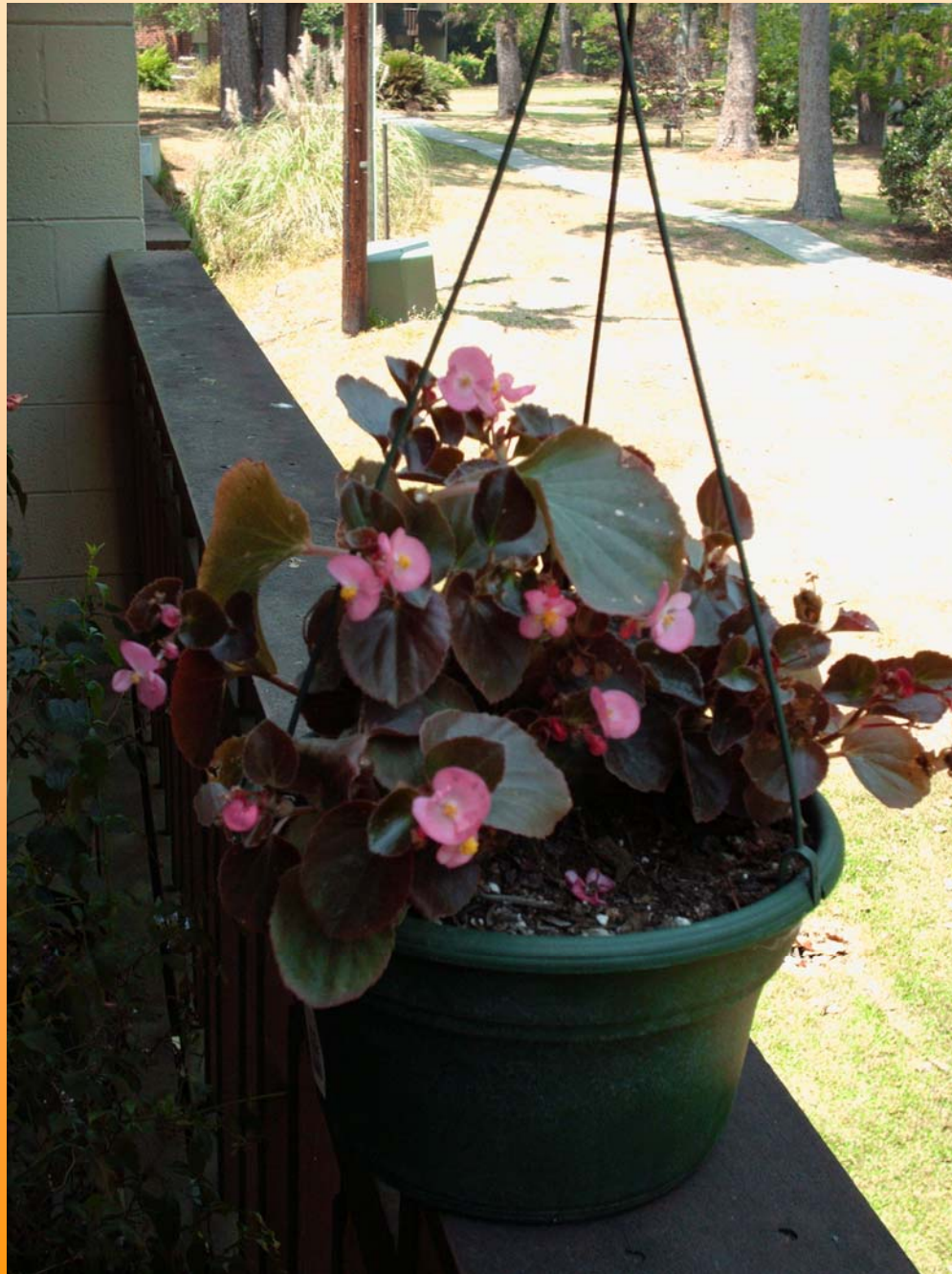


1. Hand pull young seedlings and larger plants, prevent re-rooting of cuttings
2. Mowing is effective but could spread stem pieces that may root and grow new plants

Chemical - Foliar



1. Over-the-top applications of glyphosate at 1% solution plus 0.25% surfactant
2. Thoroughly wet leaves with herbicide
3. Retreatment will likely be necessary for germinating seedlings
4. Limited testing with other herbicides, including pre-emergence for seeds



Useful Links

- Floridata Homepage:
http://www.floridata.com/main_fr.cfm?state=Welcome&viewsrc=welcome.htm
- University of Florida Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants:
<http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/welcome.html>
- University of Florida's Cooperative Extension Electronic Data Information Source: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html>

Useful Links

- The Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group. Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/index.htm>
- Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER). Plant Threats to Pacific Ecosystems: <http://www.hear.org/pier/threats.htm>
- Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States: <http://www.invasive.org>

Literature Cited

Langeland, K.A. and K. Craddock Burks. 1998. Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. IFAS Publication SP 257. University of Florida, Gainesville. 165 pp