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
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


• 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