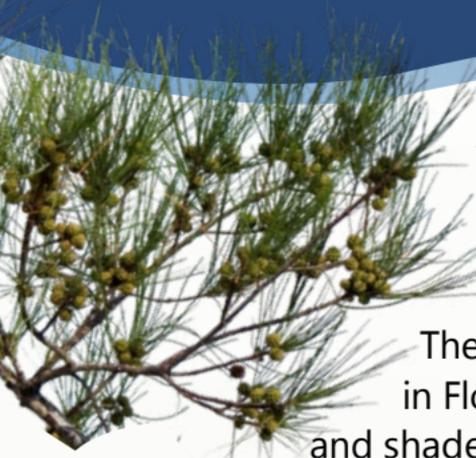


# Invasive Australian Pine

*Casuarina equisetifolia*



**Australian Pine is an invasive evergreen tree that is not actually a pine at all.**

The tree was intentionally planted in Florida in the 1890s for lumber and shade and to act as a windbreak. Now, Australian Pine has spread well beyond its intended area and is negatively impacting our coastal communities, including here in Pinellas County. The shallow root system contributes to beach erosion and makes the tree prone to toppling during high wind, while the leaves contain a chemical that kills all native plants growing below. Many Floridians enjoy the shade Australian Pines can provide but don't realize the harm they cause to nesting sea turtles, gopher tortoises and other native plants and animals.



*Australian Pine is native to Australia, the South Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia.*

## NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- **Kills native plants** by releasing growth-inhibiting chemicals into the soil from dropped leaves
- **Reduces biodiversity** by disrupting habitats that native wildlife, such as gopher tortoises, depends on
- **Invades beaches**, destroying important habitat for nesting sea turtles and contributing to erosion
- **Is a hazard** in high wind and storms due to its shallow root system



For more information, call (727) 464-7503  
or visit [www.pinellascounty.org/vegetation](http://www.pinellascounty.org/vegetation)

## INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

### Australian Pine



#### DESCRIPTION

Australian Pine is a tropical evergreen tree with brittle, reddish-brown bark. The slender stems resemble pine needles with grayish-green scale-like leaves. The tree produces tiny, brown flowers from April to June and "winged" seeds from September to December that are carried by wind.



*A chemical in the Australian Pine's leaves kills native plants.*

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- ! Remove Australian Pine trees in your yard**  
Removal in Pinellas County may require a permit depending on your municipality. Check [pinellascounty.org/drs/trees.htm](http://pinellascounty.org/drs/trees.htm) for more info.
- ! Replace it with a Florida-friendly or native tree or shrub**  
Sea Grape, Buttonwood, Long Leaf Pine and Slash Pine are some alternative native planting choices.
- ! Remove and dispose of the dropped leaves found on the ground**  
The dropped leaves have chemicals that prevent native plants from growing in the soil below. ■