

Invasive Melaleuca Tree



Melaleuca quinquenervia



Melaleuca can produce massive amounts of seeds, up to 20 million per year by a single tree, that are easily dispersed by wind and remain viable for years.

Melaleuca, also known as punk tree, was introduced to Florida in the late 1800s. Its thick canopy shades out native plants, and it forms dense stands that can alter water flow and soil conditions. It can also grow in almost any habitat, wet or dry, which contributed to its wide spread and large impacts, especially in the Everglades.

Biological control agents, melaleuca weevil and melaleuca psyllid, were released in the late 1990s and early 2000s to combat this invasive tree. *Punk tree is on the Florida Noxious Weed List and sale is prohibited.*



*Native to:
Australia, Papua
New Guinea,
Indonesia and
New Caledonia.*



NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- **Alters water flow** and soil conditions.
- **Displaces** native plant species.
- **Reduces habitat** and food sources for wildlife.
- When in bloom, releases oils and associated odor which can be a **significant allergen for some.**
- **Contributes to hotter wildland fires.**

For more information, call (727) 464-7503
or visit [Pinellas.gov/invasive-plants](https://www.pinellas.gov/invasive-plants).



INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Melaleuca



DESCRIPTION

Melaleuca is an evergreen tree that grows up to 80 feet tall with thick, light-colored, papery bark. It has long, narrow, leathery leaves that are fragrant when crushed. The flowers are six-inches, creamy white, and bottlebrush-shaped. Fruit are woody capsules with numerous tiny seeds.



Melaleuca has "peeling," papery bark.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

! Remove melaleuca trees in your yard.

Removal in Pinellas County may require a permit depending on your municipality. Check [Pinellas.gov/tree-removal-habitat-environmental-compliance](https://www.pinellas.gov/tree-removal-habitat-environmental-compliance).



! Replace it with a native or Florida-friendly tree or shrub.

Buttonwood, sweetbay and sycamore are some alternative native planting choices.

! Dispose of melaleuca debris properly.

Choose a disposal site where debris will be burned or buried in a landfill.