



Look out for Miconia

(*Miconia calvescens*)

Australian gardeners are being asked to help stop the spread of the 'purple plague' – a plant with giant purple leaves that poses a serious threat to our rainforests.

Miconia has the potential to be environmentally and economically detrimental to Australia.

This plant has been noted in some gardens, taking pride of place as a stunning foliage specimen. However it should be stressed that this plant is banned from cultivation and must be destroyed immediately. Plants must not be propagated, distributed to others or sold.

Leaves are large, often up to 60-70cm long and are iridescent purple on the undersides and have three prominent veins – very similar to *Tibouchina* leaves but more attractive. Flowers are 4-5mm white to pink in colour. The fruit is 6mm in diameter and are purple to black when ripe, Miconia produces hundreds of fruit that can spread many kilometres after being eaten by birds.

Miconia was first introduced into Australia in 1963 (Townsville Botanic Gardens). At present, active infestations are found only in northern Queensland; however, there is potential for Miconia to establish in northern regions of Western Australia and Northern Territory and the northern and coastal regions of Queensland and New South Wales.

If you think you have found this plant please contact Travis Sydes (Land Protection Officer) on (07) 4064 1144 or 0428 111 713, or Dr Kylie Galway (Project Coordinator) on (07) 4064 1185.

More information on miconia, including a warning brochure, is available at: www.nrw.qld.gov.au

