



## The Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge

The Brevard County section of the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge stretches from the Sebastian Inlet State Recreation Area in the south to the Coconut Point Park beach access south of Melbourne Beach. Designated as a National Wildlife Refuge by Congress in 1990, the Archie Carr Refuge is recognized as one of the most important areas in the world for nesting sea turtles. Private, local, state and federal partners continue to acquire lands for the protection of the entire barrier island ecosystem within the Refuge.

## Archie Carr Refuge: Pepper Free by 2003

Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) is an invasive exotic plant that has invaded the maritime hammock and coastal habitats of the Archie Carr Refuge. Until now, there has been no mechanism to include citizens in the efforts to eradicate Brazilian Pepper from within the Refuge. The **Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program** and the **Marine Resources Council (MRC)** are providing assistance with the removal of Brazilian Pepper from private property through a grant funded by the Department of Community Affairs's Coastal Management Program.

## Pepper Free By 2003 Partners



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# PEPPER FREE BY 2003



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## The Ecological Threat

Brazilian Pepper is an aggressive invader that spreads rapidly. The bushy trees produce dense thickets with low hanging limbs forming a tangle of impenetrable vegetation. Covering more than 1,000,000 acres in Florida, it is the most widespread exotic plant in the state.

## How to Identify Brazilian Pepper

Brazilian Pepper—also known as Christmas Berry and Florida Holly—is an evergreen shrub or small tree with a maximum height of 20 feet. The trunk is often multi-stemmed. When growing in open areas, trees are rounded and made up of numerous, long, arching, leafy branches. The glossy leaves are dark green above and pale below.

Crushed leaves produce a pungent peppery aroma similar to the smell of turpentine. Chemicals given off by blooms may cause allergic reactions, and because Brazilian Pepper is a relative of poison ivy, direct contact can cause skin irritation.



## How to Get Involved

The **Pepper Free By 2003** program is seeking home owners who wish to have Brazilian Pepper removed from their property. EEL Program staff, in cooperation with the **Marine Resources Council** (MRC), will coordinate plant removal with home owners and reward participants with native plant(s) provided by **Maple Street Natives**. Participants will be recognized at quarterly public meetings and provided with a display sign declaring their property as "Pepper Free." Additionally, the **Pepper Free By 2003** program welcomes members of the community who wish to become volunteers in this effort.



A typical Brazilian Pepper shrub



Close-up of Brazilian Pepper leaves and berries



A Brazilian Pepper seedling showing new growth

## How to Treat Brazilian Pepper Yourself

The **Archie Carr Refuge: Pepper Free by 2003** program is dedicated to helping homeowners identify and eradicate Brazilian Pepper from their properties located within the Refuge. For those who prefer to conduct the work themselves, some helpful tips are offered here.

The most effective way to treat Brazilian Pepper is by a method known as cut-stump. This involves cutting the tree with a saw as close to the ground as possible and applying an herbicide to the stump within five minutes of cutting. The herbicide must contain the active ingredient *glyphosate* or *triclopyr* and should be applied as carefully as possible to the thin layer of living tissue called the *cambium*, which is just inside the bark of the stump. A readily available herbicide is **Super Concentrate Roundup** (41% *glyphosate*). Be sure to follow label directions carefully, and always wear gloves, eye protection, and long sleeved pants and shirts.

The best time to treat Brazilian Pepper is when it is not fruiting. If this is not practical, take care to minimize the spread of seeds to locations where they may become a problem. Monitor the area and pull up any seedlings that sprout. If you are unsure whether or not you have Brazilian Pepper on your property or need further assistance, you can contact EEL Program staff at 321-633-2046 or email [pepper@brevardparks.com](mailto:pepper@brevardparks.com).



Dalhoon Holly, often confused with Brazilian Pepper—note the darker, waxy leaves