**Dioscorea alata**  
**WINGED YAM**  
**Dioscoreaceae**

**Common Synonyms:** Dioscorea atropurpurea, D. purpurea, D. sativa

**FLEPPC Category:** 1  
**FDACS Listed Noxious Weed:** Yes  
**IFAS Assessment**  
- North: PROHIBITED  
- Central: PROHIBITED  
- South: PROHIBITED  
**USDA Hardiness Zone:** 8a-10b  
**Growth Habit:** Forb/Herb, Vine  
**Origin:** Southeast Asia

**Description:** Aggressive twining vine from a large underground tuber. Stems can be greater than 10 m in length. Internodes along the stem are square shaped with red-purple wings. Leaves have long petioles and are opposite, although often leaves fall off leaving single leaves visible. Leaves are 20 cm or longer, heart shaped, narrow, with angular basal lobes. Dioecious species with male and female flowers on separate plants. The flowers are inconspicuous. Male flowers in panicles up to 30 cm long, while female flowers grow in smaller spikes. Fruit is a 3 parted capsule with winged seeds. Bulbils (aerial tubers) form in leaf axils and are elongate, to 10 cm long and 3 cm wide. They are rough and bumpy in texture.

The air-potato (Dioscorea bulbifera) is similar, but has small or no underground tubers and alternate leaves. Native yam species such as Florida yam (Dioscorea floridana) is found infrequently in hammocks and floodplains of north and west Florida but does not form aerial tubers.

**Habitat:** Disturbed sites

**Florida Introduction Date:** Introduced to the Americas in the 1500s but is a recent introduction to Florida (1900s)

**Control Methods:** Mechanical: Cut vines that are high in trees; cut bulbils and remove from site. Dig up underground tubers if possible.  
Chemical: Foliar (1-2% glyphosate [IFAS]), cut stems (10% triclopyr ester [IFAS] or undiluted triclopyr amine [UGA]).

**Useful Resources:**  

**Comments:** Particularly devastating to coastal hammocks in south Florida. Has an 8-10 month growing season and experiences dormancy for 3-4 months.

*This report generated by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory - www.fnai.org - August 2018*