

Spiked pepper

Call Biosecurity Queensland immediately on **13 25 23** if you see this species



Spiked pepper (*Piper aduncum*)

- A quick-growing small tree up to 8 m high, peppery taste and smell.
- Flowers and fruits throughout the year.
- Poisonous to livestock.
- Early detection helps protect Queensland's agricultural industries and natural environment.

Description

Native to South and Central America, spiked pepper is a quick-growing small tree that is a serious invasive plant in Papua New Guinea and other Pacific and South-East Asian countries. It is poisonous to livestock and can form infestations that exclude native vegetation. Preferred habitat is rainforests, roadsides, waterways and pastures. It is not known to occur in Queensland but has potential to become a serious invasive plant if introduced and planted.

Spiked pepper is a small tree up to 8 m high and up to 10 cm or more in stem diameter. Alternate leaves have short petioles and elliptic to lanceolate blades 12–20 cm long. Spikes contain minute flowers that develop into imbedded drupes (fruits) with brown or black seeds, 0.7–1.25 mm long. Flowers are white to pale yellow at first, turning green when mature. Peppery taste and smell. It reproduces from seeds that are dispersed by birds, flying foxes and in soil sticking to machinery.

Pest risk

Spiked pepper is a prohibited invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. Prohibited species must be reported immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**. It must not be introduced, kept, moved, supplied, or released into the environment.

What should I do?

If you think you have seen spiked pepper, report it to Biosecurity Queensland immediately on **13 25 23**. Until an authorised officer contacts you, take reasonable and practical measures to prevent it from spreading.

Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23** or visit our website at biosecurity.qld.gov.au.