

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pasco Extension Helping Control Brazilian Peppertree Infestations

~~UF/IFAS Scientists to coordinate with Pasco Parks, Recreation, & Natural Resources~~

PASCO COUNTY, FL ---- The [UF/IFAS Pasco County Extension](#) Office is coordinating the release of host-specific thrips, which are tiny insects, to control Brazilian peppertree infestations on Pasco Environmental Lands.

The species of thrips being used will only feed on Brazilian peppertree and has shown great effectiveness at controlling the invasive plant in laboratory studies. Scientists from the University of Florida in Fort Pierce are coordinating the release of the insects with biologists from the [Pasco Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources](#) Department.

Brazilian peppertree is a noxious plant that takes over native vegetation such as pine flatwoods and protective mangroves. UF/IFAS Scientists were granted approval in 2019 for the release of the thrips as a biological control.

Potential benefits of Brazilian peppertree control with thrips:

- ✓ Lower cost from reduced herbicide use
- ✓ Less herbicide impact on non-target plants
- ✓ Protected mangroves can thrive along coastlines
- ✓ Native vegetation will see less impact from the noxious weed
- ✓ Thrips species only feeds on the Brazilian peppertree



For more information about release dates and details, call the UF/IFAS Pasco Extension Office at 352.518.0156 or e-mail greich@pascocountyfl.net.