

WEED NOTE Mid-West

Japanese pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)

FAMILY: Anacardiaceae

STATUS: Alien, serious environmental weed (invasive and presence dramatically alters ecology)².

TYPE: Erect/sprawling, perennial shrub/tree.

IDENTIFICATION: *Schinus terebinthifolius* (Japanese pepper) can be distinguished by branchlets not hanging, leaves and also the bright red fruits smell peppery when they are crushed¹.

DESCRIPTION: Japanese pepper is an erect tree or sprawling shrub that can grow up to 15 metres tall, but more commonly to 6 metres. Male trees produce small cream flowers in late summer, whilst the female trees produce the bright red fruit that is 1-seeded³.

DISTRIBUTION: Japanese pepper originates from Brazil³.

PREFERRED HABITAT: Japanese pepper has escaped from cultivation and can be found in areas that are disturbed³, but can invade a number of natural environments¹.

KNOWN LOCATIONS IN WA:

Japanese pepper has been recorded around Geraldton, Perth and in the Goldfields³.



Plate 1: Seedling



Plate 2: Leaves



Plate 3: Flowers

Plate 4: Distinguishing feature



THREAT/ IMPACT: Environmental

Japanese pepper can dominate ecosystems preventing growth of native species¹. Berries are most likely spread by birds so they can be transported over long distances³.

References

¹ Weeds Australia (2012). *Schinus terebinthifolius*. Accessed from: <<http://www.weeds.org.au/cgi-bin/weedident.cgi?tpl=plant.tpl&ibra=all&card=T41>>. [3 October 2012].

² PlantNet - New South Wales Flora Online (2012). *Schinus terebinthifolius*. Accessed from: <[http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Schinus terebinthifolius](http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Schinus%20terebinthifolius)>. [3 October 2012].

³ Hussey B.M.J, Keighery, G.J., Dodd, J., Lloyd, S.G., Cousens, R.D., (2007). *Western Weeds A Guide to the Weeds of Western Australia*, (2nd Edition), Weeds Society of Western Australia, Victoria Park, Western Australia.

Author: Nick Wilson