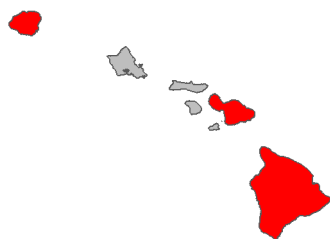


Fire risk report for *Morella cerifera*

Full Species Name <i>Morella cerifera</i> (L.) Small
Family: Myricaceae
Common names: southern wax myrtle
Synonyms: <i>Myrica cerifera</i>
Known occurrences (as of 2020) 
Year first documented as naturalized in Hawai'i: 1985
This species has been ranked by the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment program as High Risk with a score of 20.
View photos on Starr Environmental
View on Wikipedia
View occurrences on iNaturalist
View at Plants of Hawaii
View photos on Flickr

0 .5 1
Lowest risk Highest risk

This species is likely a **high** fire risk in Hawai'i with a fire risk score of **0.50**.

This species was ranked by our machine learning algorithm using the data presented on the next page. A predicted score of > .34 suggests the plant is a high fire risk.

Summary of Fire ecology	
Native habitat fire proneness	Fire-prone
Fire promoting plant in its native range	Yes
Fire promoting plant in its introduced range*	No
Regenerates after fire	Yes
Promoted by fire	Yes
Reported flammable*	High
Relative is flammable*	No

*These values were used by the model to predict fire risk

Detailed summary of Fire Ecology

Native habitat fire proneness (In any part of the plant's native range is its habitat described as fire prone due to natural or human caused fires?)	Fire-prone	"Myrica cerifera (southern bayberry or waxmyrtle) is one of the most common shrubs in the longleaf pine/bluestem forest type in the West Gulf Coastal Plain. During controlled burns, individual plants can burn intensely because the wax coated foliage and fruits are very flammable... However, Myrica cerifera is adapted to survival on frequently burned longleaf pine sites by resprouting vigorously from the root collar." Haywood, J. D., Pearson, H. A., Grelen, H. E., & Popham, T. W. (2000). Effects of date and frequency of burning on southern bayberry (Myrica cerifera) in central Louisiana. Texas Journal of Science 52(4): 33-42) ----- "M. cerifera is native to coastal regions of the southeastern United States" https://doi.org/10.1007/s10530-007-9101-5 Kurten, Erin, Carolyn Snyder, Terri Iwata, and Peter Vitousek. "Morella Cerifera Invasion and Nitrogen Cycling on a Lowland Hawaiian Lava Flow." Biological Invasions 10 (2008): 19–24.
Fire promoting plant in its native range (Does the species act as a major fuel source, increase fire severity, frequency, or modify fuel bed characteristics within its native range?)	Yes	"Myrica cerifera (southern bayberry or waxmyrtle) is one of the most common shrubs in the longleaf pine/bluestem forest type in the West Gulf Coastal Plain. During controlled burns, individual plants can burn intensely because the wax coated foliage and fruits are very flammable... However, Myrica cerifera is adapted to survival on frequently burned longleaf pine sites by resprouting vigorously from the root collar." Haywood, J. D., Pearson, H. A., Grelen, H. E., & Popham, T. W. (2000). Effects of date and frequency of burning on southern bayberry (Myrica cerifera) in central Louisiana. Texas Journal of Science 52(4): 33-42)
Fire promoting plant in its introduced range (Same as Fire Promoting Native but within the species introduced range)	No	#not widely introduced, data not expected
Regenerates after fire (Does the plant regrow)	Yes	"Typically the entire aerial portion of the stem dies [13], although extremely light fires may only kill the most recent

after fire by any means? This includes resprouters, reseeder, and recruiters which dispersed into the area within approximately one year post fire)		annual growth [21]. The root crown survives and remains vigorous." https://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/morcer/all.html#FIRE%20ECOLOGY
Promoted by fire (Does the plant increase in abundance after a fire?)	Yes	"Fire periodicity probably determines the long-term fire response of wax myrtle. In loblolly stands in South Carolina, single or occasional summer fires caused wax myrtle cover to increase. By contrast, annual summer fires reduced wax myrtle cover and sprouting vigor, eventually eliminating it. Lotti [27] documented 100 percent mortality after as few as three successive annual summer fires." #Can be promoted by low intensity fire only https://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/morcer/all.html#FIRE%20ECOLOGY ----- "Myrica cerifera increased from preburn values in the <0.5 m layer by six months [after fire]" Schmalzer, P. A., & Hinkle, C. R. (1992). Recovery of oak-saw palmetto scrub after fire. Castanea, 158-173.
Reported flammable (Is the species described as being flammable, being a major wildfire fuel, or high fire risk?)	High	"Myrica cerifera (southern bayberry or waxmyrtle) is one of the most common shrubs in the longleaf pine/bluestem forest type in the West Gulf Coastal Plain. During controlled burns, individual plants can burn intensely because the wax coated foliage and fruits are very flammable... However, Myrica cerifera is adapted to survival on frequently burned longleaf pine sites by resprouting vigorously from the root collar." Haywood, J. D., Pearson, H. A., Grelen, H. E., & Popham, T. W. (2000). Effects of date and frequency of burning on southern bayberry (Myrica cerifera) in central Louisiana. Texas Journal of Science 52(4): 33-42 ----- "highly flammable" https://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr203/psw_gtr203_010haywood.pdf
Relative is flammable (Does a plant in the same genus meet the	No	Morella faya is not considered a "fire hazard in natural ecosystems) according to its Hawaii Weed Risk Assessment

Reported Flammable criteria?)		
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Text in quotes are direct quotes from the source

Text in square brackets was added by the assessor to clarify something or to summarize from a figure.

Text preceded by a “#” is comment from the assessor

The data presented were assembled from literature and database searches for each species using as much data as could be collected regarding the plant’s fire ecology under natural conditions. Searches aimed to be exhaustive and consist of as much data as could be located in 2020. Our machine learning algorithm was trained on 49 species of plants which had their fire risk ranked by 49 managers in Hawai’i in November 2020. The model used a conditional random forest regression algorithm to predict scores for each species using the manager score as the response variable and the fire ecology traits of each plant as the predictor variables to generate a fire risk score. This trained model was then used to predict the fire risk for all species which were not ranked by managers. The model was calibrated such that it is 90% accurate at predicting high fire risk plants and 79% accurate at predicting low fire risk plants. This research and the resulting fire risk model has been published in the journal [Biological Invasions](#) by [Kevin Faccenda](#) and [Curt Daehler](#) (both at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa).

Note that the analysis doesn’t account for a plant species’ spatial distribution, population density, or distinct climate and ecosystem conditions (which can also influence fire risk). The fire risk of these species are mostly under “worst case” environmental conditions where the climate is dry enough to maintain fire, but wet enough to allow for plant growth and fuel accumulation. The fire risk ranking should not be taken as a stand-alone risk metric in prioritizing weed control efforts. Rather, this information may also be useful for determining if a newly discovered species poses a potential fire threat in wildland areas.

More general information on the weed risks and ecology of non-native plants in Hawai’i is available from the Hawai’i Invasive Species Committee’s [Weed Risk Assessment database](#).

View more fact sheets at <https://www.pacificfireexchange.org/weed-fire-risk-assessments>

Fact sheet prepared by Kevin Faccenda (faccenda@hawaii.edu) in November 2021. Data were prepared by Ronja Steinbach and Kevin Faccenda in 2020.

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