

INVASIVE PLANT: Chain-of-Love
(*Antigonon leptopus* , Dilngau)

DESCRIPTION: A very fast growing vine which attaches to stems and leaves of plants. The leaves are arrowhead shaped, and are always produced alternately on the stem. Chain-of-Love can also be recognized by the tendrils, slender branches which twine around other plants to hold up the vine, similar to the tendrils on cucumber and pumpkin vines. The flowers are small and pink, and are produced in clusters of dozens to hundreds of flowers. Flowering occurs at any time of year in Palau. This plant will grow in almost any soil, including farms, volcanic soils, and rock islands, and it can grow in full sun or in partial shade. Chain-of-Love has been intentionally planted in many tropical Pacific Islands because of its attractive flowers.



THREAT: Chain-of-Love can completely cover trees, smothering and killing large areas of native forest. The death of trees can result in less food for native birds, bats, and other animals. Loss of forest can also increase soil erosion, leading to increased sedimentation and death of coral reefs. Because it can grow in almost any soil, Chain-of-Love is a threat to forests on all islands in Palau. Chain-of-Love is also a threat to farms.



CURRENT STATUS: Chain-of-Love is not widespread in Palau, but it has the potential to become a very serious problem. It has covered large areas of natural vegetation on the island of Guam, and it can potentially do the same in forests in Palau. Chain-of-Love is the target of an education campaign by the Bureau of Agriculture and the Palau Natural Resource Council, with the support of several other organizations and agencies. The campaign needs your support.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: If you have Chain-of-Love in your garden, please dig it up by the roots and destroy it. Do not plant any more of this very invasive vine. If you see this plant in someone's garden, explain to them why it should be destroyed. The public is requested to report any sightings of Chain-of-Love to Joseph Tiobech, the Invasive Weeds Eradication Officer, at the Bureau of Agriculture, telephone number 544-5804, or to Joel Miles at OERC, 488-8681.