

Citharexylum caudatum

Juniper berry

Citharexylum caudatum L.

Family: Verbenaceae

Description: Branched tree to 60 ft tall. Leaves opposite, 5 inches long by 1.5 inches wide, smooth, upper surface glossy, lower surface dull. Flowers small, white, bell shaped, on elongated, narrow, tail-like clusters. Fruits appear in spring–summer in cylindrical clusters, green, matures to orange, then black. Four seeds per fruit. Little and Skolmen⁽³²⁾ refers to this plant as fiddlewood, however Wagner et al.⁽⁷⁰⁾ states that fiddlewood is the common name of a related species, *C. spinosum*, which may be becoming naturalized in Hawai‘i. Haselwood et al.⁽²⁰⁾ lists *C. caudatum* as juniper berry. Name derived from *kithara*, Greek for lyre, and *xylon*, for wood or fiddle-wood; *caudatum* is in reference to the tail-like inflorescence and fruit cluster.

Distribution: Native to Central America and the Caribbean. Introduced in 1931 to what is now Lyon Arboretum from where it escaped into the forests of O‘ahu. It occurs over most of windward O‘ahu and is very common along the windward side of the Pali Highway and into the Honolulu side and in the hills above Kaneohe Bay Drive. It also occurs on Kaua‘i, at least in Anahola Valley, and there is a heavy infestation on Hawai‘i in the Pepe‘ekee area. A common landscape ornamental, juniper berry trees are also common as street ornamen-



tals in downtown Honolulu, on Hotel St. near Bishop St., and around the main police station. It is also a common ornamental in the Kona area.

Environmental impact: Prolific seeder, spread by birds. Displacing existing vegetation in mesic to humid lowland forests and other non-cropland.

Management: No work reported.