



Do Not Cultivate

SMALL CROWNFLOWER
Calotropis procera



Forest and Kim Starr



Ilan Keen - Wikicommons



Forest and Kim Starr

Description: Erect, woody shrub to 8' tall

Flowers: White to lavender clusters of crown shaped flowers to 1" long

Don't confuse with this look alike:



Forest and Kim Starr

Crownflower

Leaves: Gray-green, leathery, succulent, oblong leaves, 4-6" long. All parts are toxic

Seeds: Round, green fruit to 5" long filled with thousands of small brown seeds with silky white parachutes



Forest and Kim Starr

SHRUB

SMALL CROWNFLOWER

Origin: Africa, Arabia, India

Calotropis procera



USE CAUTION: TOXIC PARTS!

HWRA Score: 15

Family: Apocynaceae

Big Island Habitat: Dry lowlands and coasts

Description: An upright, woody shrub with oblong, leathery gray-green leaves. The plant has an overall hairy appearance. Produces attractive clusters of white to lavender crown-like flowers, and round, green fruit which open to release many small wind borne seeds. Sap causes skin and eye irritation and all plant parts are extremely toxic if ingested.

Impacts: Small crownflower thrives in sunny, low elevation areas, including coastal locations. It forms dense stands, choking out native vegetation.

Dispersal Mechanism: Small crownflower readily produces fruit and seed, unlike its larger, widely cultivated cousin crownflower, which is commonly used for lei. Each pod contains thousands of small brown seeds with parachute-like appendages, which are blown over long distances by even small breezes.

Cultivation: Small crownflower was brought to Hawai'i from Egypt in 1925 for cultivation as an ornamental plant. This cousin of the larger crownflower quickly became a noxious weed and should never be cultivated in Hawai'i.

Don't confuse with:

- **Crownflower** (*Calotropis gigantea*) This close cousin is a much larger plant, growing up to 15 feet tall, resembling a small tree. The leaves are larger, up to 8 inches long, and the flowers are up to 2 inches wide with a more pronounced central column, which are commonly used in lei making. Crownflower is also invasive and common in gardens and cultivated landscapes.

SHRUB