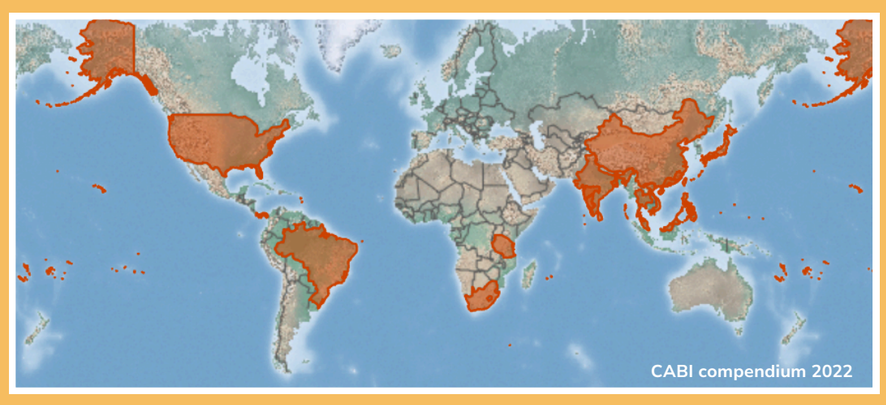
BE AWARE!

Erythrina gall wasp - *Quadrastichus erythrinae*

THE ORGANISM

The Erythrina gall wasp is a highly invasive pest that threatens *Erytrina* species globally. It is believed to have originated in East Africa but its current distribution includes the Far East, SE Asia, North and Central America as well as the Caribbean islands.



The life cycle of the EGW is approximately 20 days from egg to adult. This includes egg, larva, pupa and adult stages.

HOW TO RECOGNISE IT ?

1. APPEARANCE

- **Adult wasps are typically not visible to the naked eye with females larger than males.**
- **Eggs are laid in young leaf and stem tissue, inducing gall formation as larvae develop.**
- **After feeding, larvae pupate within the galls and adults emerge by chewing exit holes**

2. SYMPTOMS ON PLANTS

- **Gall formation in young leaves, stems, petioles, flowers and seed pods.**
- **Leaf deformation and defoliation. Infested leaves become curled and deformed leading to defoliation and reduced plant vigour.**

THE PROBLEM

Gall wasp infestations can cause severe damage to *Erythrin*a species, leading to reduced plant vigour, defoliation and potential death if left untreated.

Damage to collections: Severe infestations can result in the loss of unique specimens as well as disruption to local ecosystems due to declines of native *Erythrina* species populations. Some *Erythrina* species are highly susceptible, especially *E. variegata*, which are frequently killed by the gall wasp.

Economic impact: This pest poses a serious threat that not only affects botanic gardens and arboreta. Managing infestations require significant resources, including labour and financial investment in pest control measures .

WHAT TO DO?

PREVENTION

1. **Quarantine:** Implement strict quarantine measures to protect uninfested areas.
2. **Responsible sourcing:** Source specimens from reputable suppliers.
3. **Plant choice:** Avoid planting highly susceptible species such as *E. variegata.*

DETECTION & MANAGEMENT

1. **Monitoring:** Regularly monitor the collection (especially newly introduced plants) for early signs of infestation (galls & emergence holes).
2. **Disposal:** Dispose of infested plant material properly to prevent further spread.
3. **Training:** Train garden staff and volunteers to recognise and report Erythrina gall wasp.
4. **Reporting:** Report sightings to local agricultural or environmental authorities.

For more information:

- Erythrina Gall Wasp, State of Hawaii, Dept. of Agriculture
- The Erythrina Gall Wasp Quadrastichus erythrinae (Insecta: Hymenoptera: Eulophidae): Invasion History, Ecology, Infestation and Management

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