Weeds of the Southern United States
What is a "weed"?

Our world is green with many kinds of plants. All plants are in some way useful and beneficial. But some plants are undesirable in situations created by man to serve his particular needs.

These plants are called "weeds," and are most simply defined as "plants out of place." This definition may be expanded to include any plant that:

- presents difficulty in cultivating desirable plants
- has a potential for decreasing the value of plant and animal products
- causes losses through increased cultivation or harvesting costs
- reduces yield and quality
- presents a hazard of poisoning man and animals
- interferes with enjoyment of outdoor recreation
- destroys the aesthetic value of turf and other ornamental plantings.

Weeds are known by everyone, but are not necessarily recognized. Effective selective weed control efforts depend upon the ability to recognize (identify) plants, thereby permitting an intelligent choice of cultural practices and herbicide use.

This publication should aid in recognizing 120 of the more common weeds in the southern United States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia). Respondents from these states to a survey suggested names of more than 300 weeds for use in this publication.

Priorities were assigned for use on the basis of most common occurrence and/or difficulty of control. We have attempted also to represent all the southern states with weeds peculiar to the widely varying environments. Nevertheless, there are at least 180 weeds of lesser importance which are not shown, and which present problems over large or local areas.

Common names of weeds conform to the Weed Science Society of America Terminology Committee report.

Botanical names conform first to the WSSA Terminology report, or alternatively to Small's "Manual of Southeastern Flora," or to Gray's "Manual of Botany."
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Selection of weeds for use in this publication was based on two surveys sent to Extension agronomists (and certain research personnel) in each southern region state.
Anacardiaceae
(Cashew family)

Woody plants with acrid juice, sometimes containing a poisonous substance. Alternate leaves, small flowers. Two genera, eight species. Common genera: Rhus, Cotinus.

*Rhus radicans*
poison ivy

Perennial woody vine or shrub, often climbing by short rootlets on trees or fences. Smooth stems, light brown to grayish. Alternate leaves with three large, broad, shiny leaflets with either smooth or irregular-toothed edges. Smooth, almost round, greenish-white berries about \(\frac{1}{4}\) inch diameter. Found in open woods, fencerows, old fields and on ditch banks.

Apocynaceae
(Dogbane family)

Herbs with milky, acrid juice, entire opposite leaves (like milkweed except lack of corona in flower). Four genera, 10+ species. Common genera: Vinca (periwinkle), Apocynum (dogbane).

*Apocynum cannabinum*
hemp dogbane

Perennial. Stems erect, one to three feet tall from woody, horizontal rootstocks, with milky sap. Leaves smooth, elliptical, narrow, erect. Flowers small, with five greenish-white petals. Seed pod long and slender, curved. Seed with soft, silky hairs on one end. Found in old fields and wasteland.

Asclepiadaceae
(Milkweed family)

Herbs with milky, acrid juice, entire opposite leaves, compound flower heads, five stamens adherent to pistil, with corona. Seven genera, 35+ species. Common genera: Asclepias, Ampelamus.

*Ampelamus albidus*
honeyvine milkweed

Perennial. Smooth, twining vine, without milky juice. Opposite leaves smooth, broad, heart-shaped, pointed, with long petioles. Small, whitish flowers in clusters on stalks from leaf axils. Seed pod brownish-green, smooth and pointed. Seed brown, oval, flattened, with silky white hairs. Found in rich, moist, cultivated fields and fence rows.
**Asclepias tuberosa**
*butterfly milkweed*
Perennial. Stems usually one to four, clustered from rootstock, one to two feet long. Stems without noticeably milky sap. Leaves broadly oval, rough-hairy, clasping stem. Flowers in clusters or racemes, variable color from light yellow to orange to red. Seed pod a follicle, egg-shaped seed with silky white hairs. Found on dry, open soils.

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**(Bignonia family)**

Woody plants with large, showy flowers and usually opposite, simple or compound leaves. Fruit a dry capsule with large, flat-winged seed. Three genera, 5+ species. Common genera: Campsis, Bignonia, Catalpa.

**Campsis radicans**
*trumpet creeper*
Perennial woody vine. Spreads by seed and roots. Stems smooth, 20 to 40 feet long. Leaves opposite, 6 to 15 inches long, compound, with 7 to 11 leaflets. Flowers funnel- or trumpet-shaped, large, color orange to scarlet, in short-stemmed clusters. Seed pod four to six inches long, round but flattened on two sides, slightly curved. Found in fencerows, fields.

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**(Honeysuckle family)**


**Lonicera japonica**
*Japanese honeysuckle*
Perennial twining or trailing woody vine. Leaves oval, smooth margins, short petioles. Young stems green to red, gray and brittle with age. Flowers white or tinged with purple, turning light yellow. Very fragrant. Berries black. Aggressive weed found in fencerows, forestland and old fields.
Caryophyllaceae
(Pink family)

Herbs with mostly opposite, entire leaves, often united at base. Stems usually swollen at nodes (joints). Eighteen genera, 100+ species. Common genera: Agrostemma (corn cockle), Cerastium and Stellaria (chickweed), Spergula, Silene.

\textit{Agrostemma githago}
\textit{corn cockle}

Winter annual. Stems erect, slender, rough, hairy, swollen at joints. Leaves opposite, joined at base. Flowers largo, reddish-purple to purple. Seed pod ribbed, bladder- or urn-like, seed black and rough. Seed poisonous. Found in grain crops.

\textit{Drymaria cordata}
\textit{heartleaf drymary}

Annual. Stems prostrate, succulent, spreading. Leaves round to kidney-shaped, opposite, bright green. Flowers inconspicuous, with oval seed pod. Found in gardens, roadsides, ditches in warmest regions of Southeast.

\textit{Cerastium vulgatum}
\textit{mouseear chickweed}

Perennial. Hairy, slender, spreading to erect stems. Leaves small, very hairy, opposite, attached directly to stem. Five small, white flower petals notched at tips. Seed pods very small with many tiny, brown seed. Found in lawns, pastures, abandoned fields.
Stellaria media
chickweed
Winter annual. Stems much branched, creeping or ascending. Plants spreading, 4 to 12 inches tall. Small, egg-shaped leaves, opposite, smooth, with line of hairs on petioles. Flowers with star-shaped sepals, five deeply notched white petals. Seed pod egg-like, breaking into five parts, with many small, reddish-brown seed. Found in lawns, gardens, fields, nurseries.

Chenopodiaceae
(Goosefoot family)

Succulent herbs with tiny, greenish flowers, no petals, mostly alternate leaves. Thirteen genera, 60+ species. Common genus: Chenopodium.

Chenopodium album
common lambsquarters
Summer annual. Stem erect, with vertical ridges, often with red or light green fines, one to six feet tall. Leaves alternate, grayish-green beneath, edges ragged-toothed. Young leaves usually white powdery-coated. Flowers small, green, without petals, borne at branch ends and leaf axils. Seed shiny black with gray hull. Found in cultivated crops.

Commelinaceae
(Spiderwort family)


Commelina communis
dayflower
Summer annual. Stems erect, spreading or creeping, succulent. Leaves short, lance-shaped, clasping stem, alternate. Flowers in keel- or boat-shaped, leaf-like structure, blue or purplish-blue, irregular. Found in moist fields, nurseries, ditchbanks, open woods.
Composítae
(Composite family)


*Acanthospermum hispidum*

bristly starbur

Summer annual. Stem erect, one to three feet tall, branched, hairy. Leaves oval, shallow-toothed, very hairy, light green. Flower heads radiate, yellow petals, forming two-horned or barbed burs. Found in cultivated fields, waste areas.

*Achillea millefolium*

common yarrow

Perennial. Shallow, horizontal rootstocks, stems 20 to 24 inches tall, smooth to webby hairiness. Leaves fern-like, deeply cut and divided. Flower heads many, small, yellow disk flowers and white to pink ray flowers. Strong odor when crushed. Found in pastures, lawns, fencerows, waste places.

*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*

common ragweed

Summer annual. Erect, rough, hairy, purple, branching stems one to six feet tall. Smooth leaves deeply cut into several toothed portions, alternate. Flower heads of two kinds: 1—pollen-producing, small, inverted cups in slender clusters at tips of branches. 2—seed heads borne at leaf bases and forks of upper branches. A common weed found in all croplands.
**Ambrosia trifida**
giant ragweed

Summer annual. Stems 6 to 12 feet tall. Leaves large, three- to five-lobed, in pairs at the stem joints. Similar to other ragweeds in flower, fruit and habitat.

**Anthemis cotula**
mayweed

Winter annual. Erect stems much branched, \( \frac{1}{2} \) to two feet tall, nearly smooth. Leaves finely cut, hairy, alternate, strong, unpleasant odor when crushed. Flower heads like a small daisy, center yellow, encircled by white petals. Found in unimproved pastures, old fields, waste places.

**Aster pilosus**
whiteheath aster

Perennial. Stems erect, one to four feet tall, hairy, branching. Lower leaves hairy, spoon-shaped; upper leaves smaller, smooth, narrow. Small flower heads white, sometimes purplish, borne singly on short branches. Very variable in hairiness and leaf shape. Found in wastelands, roadsides, unimproved pastures.
*Bidens bipinnata*

**Spanish needles**

Summer annual. Erect, smooth, purple stems, branching in the upper portion. Leaves divided, stalked, deeply cut, in pairs at the stem joints. Flowers with yellow center, white ray petals. Seed long, narrow, pointed, dark brown or black, with three to four barbed spines. Found in cultivated fields, woods, fencerows.

*Centaurea cyanus*

**cornflower**

Winter annual. Stems erect, many branches, one to three feet tall, softly hairy, gray-green. Leaves alternate, narrow. Flower heads single, blue, violet, pink or white petals. Found in waste places, grain fields. Used as garden plant.

*Cnicus benedictus*

**blessed thistle**

Winter annual. Leaves in rosette, with stems 18 to 36 inches tall. Flower heads borne in prickly leaf rosette. Stems and leaves hairy to bristly hairy, deeply cut leaf margins with spines and prickly hairs. Flowers yellow, in tight, egg-shaped head with sharp barbs. Seed 1/4 to 3/8 inch long, ribbed, curved, topped with crown of soft bristles which easily detach. Found in wastelands, grain fields.
**Eclipta alba**
eclipta
Summer annual. Stems red, \( \frac{1}{2} \) to three feet tall, branched. Leaves opposite, narrow, entire or slightly toothed. Flower heads small, flowers inconspicuous, bearing wedge- or tooth-shaped seed. Found in moist, cultivated fields, waste places.

**Erigeron annuus**
animal fleabane
Summer annual or biennial. Stems one to two feet tall, branching near top. Leaves mostly at stem base, upper leaves smaller. Flower head single at branch ends, disc flowers yellow, encircled with white to light purple petals. Found in old fields and waste places.

**Erigeron canadensis**
horseweed
**Eupatorium capillifolium**  
dogfennel
Perennial. Shallow taproot, multiple reddish-purple stems three to nine feet tall, branching near top. Leaves divided into several thread-like segments. Numerous tiny, white flowers developing extremely small seed tipped with feathery crowns. Found in unimproved pastures and old fields.

**Galinsoga ciliata**  
hairy galinsoga
Summer annual. Stems 4 to 20 inches tall, hairy, branched. Leaves opposite, oval, wavy margin, hairy. Flower heads small, with white petals. Found in gardens and cultivated fields.

**Gnaphalium sp.**  
cudweed
Biennial. Stem slender, one to three feet tall, some branching in upper part, covered with dense, white hairs. Leaves also covered with felt-like hairs, narrow, no petioles, basal leaves in rosette. Flower head small, white disc flowers only, at ends of branches. Found in old fields, pasture, dry wastelands.
**Helenium amarum**  
_bitter sneezeweed_


**Heterotheca subaxillaris**  
_camphorweed_

Summer annual or biennial. Stems woody, many-branched. Leaves sparse, wavy-margined, coarsely rough texture, smelling like camphor when crushed. Flower heads numerous, small, yellow, gummy receptacle and bracts. Found in fencerows, wastelands, old fields.

**Lactuca scariola**  
_wild lettuce_

Winter annual. Long, fleshy taproot, erect stems two to five feet tall, branched in upper portion. Milky juice. Leaves often turning to vertical position. Leaves alternate, edges deeply cut to form lobes with spiny or toothed edges. Mid-vein prickly beneath. Flower heads small with yellow petals. Found in cultivated fields, wasteland and roadsides.
**Pyrrhopappus carolinianus**  
*Carolina falsedandelion*

Winter annual or biennial. Stems green, six inches to two feet tall, single stem or branched. Basal leaves entire or cut, stem leaves partly clasping stem. Single flower heads at end of stems are deep lemon yellow. Found on roadsides and old pastures.

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**Senecio sp.**  
*groundsel*

Perennial. Stems erect, one to two feet tall. Leaves at base on long petioles. Leaves on stem on short petioles, deeply serrate or cleft. Flower heads yellow, on slender branches. Found in pastures, uncultivated fields and roadsides.

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**Solidago sp.**  
*goldenrod*

Perennial. Stems 1/2 foot to four feet tall, hairy, grayish-green. Basal leaves tongue-shaped, upper leaves smaller. Flower heads small, clustered on slender, curving branches two to eight inches long. Found in old fields, fencerows and open woods.
Sonchus sp.
sowthistle
Winter annual. Stem smooth, green or purple, branched. Leaves mostly entire, prickly-edged, clasping stem with pointed to rounded lobes. Flower heads small, yellow, on numerous branches. Found in gardens, pastures, roadsides, abandoned fields.

Taraxacum officinale
dandelion
Perennial. Root thick, fleshy. No stem. Leaves in rosette from crown, simple, variously lobed, milky juice. Yellow flowers, heads borne on long, bare, hollow stalk. Seed elongate, tipped with tuft of hairs. Found in lawns, pastures, gardens, waste areas.

Xanthium pensylvanicum
common cocklebur
Summer annual. Stout taproot, stem woody, one to six feet tall, branched, rough-hairy with small, dark red spots. Leaves alternate, rough-hairy, dark to yellowish-green, pale green beneath, variable in leaf margin outline. Flower heads of two kinds: 1. —pollen-producing, small, nearly round in tight clusters at tips of bur-bearing branches. 2. — mature seed heads very hard, covered with usually hooked spines, bur 3/4 to one inch long. Seedlings poisonous to livestock. Found in feed lots, fencerows, cultivated lands.
Convolvulaceae
(Morningglory family)

Twining or trailing herbs, alternate leaves, large, showy, regular flowers on a jointed peduncle, two to four seed in a globose capsule. Seven genera, 30+ species. Common genera: Dichondra, Ipomoea, Jacquemontia, Convolvulus, Cuscuta.

*Dichondra repens*
dichondra


*Convolvulus arvensis*
field bindweed

Perennial. Trailing vine from thick, Jeep, branching rootstock. Leaves alternate, with base square to heart- or arrow-shaped. Showy flowers white or pink, seed pods with four brown seed. Found in western cultivated fields in dry soil, pastures, fencerows.

*Cuscuta sp.*
dodder

Annual. A parasite without a true root system. Stems yellowish, smooth, twining, attached to host by small suckers. Scale-like leaves. Tiny flower clusters borne on stem. Found in lespedeza fields, pastures, open woods, seed beds.
**Ipomoea pandurata**  
*bigroot morningglory*  

**Ipomoea purpurea**  
*tall morningglory*  
Annual. Trailing or twining, hairy stems. Alternate leaves broad, heart-shaped. Funnel-like flowers in clusters of three to five. Flowers red, purple, blue or white. Seed brown to black. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields.

**Ipomoea quamoclit**  
*cypressvine morningglory*  
Jaquemontia tamnifolia
smallflower morningglory

Summer annual. Erect or twining, hairy stems. Leaves with long petioles, hairy, prominent veins. Small, blue flowers closely crowded with leafy bracts into tight clusters on long stalks. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields, fencerows.

Cruciferae
(Mustard family)

Herbs with pungent, watery juice. Flowers have four petals. Seed attached to membranous mid-piece from which two pod hulls split away. Forty+ genera, 147+ species. Common genera: Brassica, Capsella, Lepidium, Raphanus, Sisymbrium.

Brassica kaber
wild mustard

Winter annual. Stems erect, branched near top. Lower leaves lobed, with petioles. Upper leaves smaller, alternate, no petioles. Flowers with four conspicuous yellow petals, in clusters at ends of branches. Seed pod slender, more than one inch long, with beak about 1/3 of pod length. Seed smooth, round, black to brown, hard. Found in grain fields and other cultivated fields.

Capsella bursa-pastoris
shepherdspurse

Winter annual. Smooth, branched stem with few leaves, from basal rosette of leaves. Stems erect, 1/2 to 1 1/2 feet tall. Flowers small, four-petaled, in elongated racemes at branch ends. Seed pods angularly heart-shaped, with two parts. Seed many, yellowish. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields.
Coronopus didymus
swinecress

Lepidium virginicum
Virginia pepperweed
Winter annual or biennial. Smooth, branching, erect stem 1/2 foot to two feet tall. Leaves alternate, long, narrow, smooth, dark green. Finger-like flower clusters at ends of stems and branches. Very small flowers, forming lens-shaped seed pod, notched at top, with two seed. Found in gardens, grain fields, pastures.

Cucurbitaceae
(Gourd family)

Citrullus vulgaris
wild watermelon (citron)
Summer annual. Trailing, succulent vine with tendrils, hairy. Leaves deeply cut or lobed, color variegated white and green. Flowers pale yellow, producing a melon (pepo) with a green, hard rind, white flesh, and white to dark, flattened seed. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields, fencercows, roadsides.
**Echinocystis lobato**
wild cucumber

Summer annual. Vines branched, smooth, grooved, hairy at joints. Leaves alternate, with five to seven pointed lobes. Flowers cream-yellow, in clusters, separate male and female flowers. Seed pod is a pulpy fruit covered with sharp spines. Found in bottomland cultivated fields.

**Sicyos angulatus**
burb cucumber

Summer annual. Vine with tendrils, stem angled. Leaves five-lobed, sticky-hairy. Male and female flowers whitish, borne separately on stalks from same leaf axil. Female flowers in compact head, producing a fruit cluster on a short stalk, each fruit one-seeded, dry, covered with bristles. Found in rich bottomland, cultivated fields.

**Cyperaceae**
(Sedge family)


**Cyperus esculentus**
yellow nutsedge

Perennial. Slender, smooth, three-angled stems 1/2 foot to two feet tall. Basal leaves, except for leaf-like bracts at the seed head. Reproduces by seed, rhizomes and tubers. Plants yellowish-green in color. Rhizomes radiate from first plant, ending in bulbs or tubers, which may produce new plants. No "tuber-chains" formed. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields of the Coastal Plains.
**Cyperus rotundus**

*purple nutsedge*

Perennial. Similar to yellow nutsedge except plants are smaller, dark green, with reddish-purple seed heads. Rhizomes radiate from first plant, producing new plants or bulbs in series, forming "tuber-chains." Found in lawns, cultivated fields.

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**Euphorbiaceae**

*(Spurge family)*

Herbs usually with a milky, acrid juice, male and female flowers, ovary often on a stalk, usually three-lobed capsule. Eleven genera, 50+ species. Common genera: Croton, Acalypha, Ricinus, Euphorbia.

**Acalypha virginica**

*Virginia copperleaf*

Summer annual. Stems hairy, one to three feet tall, branched from base. Leaves egg-shaped, on long stalks, lower leaves opposite, upper leaves alternate. Flower clusters in leaf axils, separate male and female flowers, borne together. Three-lobed seed pod with three seed surrounded by leaf-like structure. Found in cultivated fields, pastures, gardens.

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**Croton capitatus**

*woolly croton*

Summer annual. Stems one to three feet tall, branched. Leaves alternate, narrow, on long stalks. Stems and leaves densely hairy, grayish-green in color. Flowers in tight clusters at ends of branches. Seed pod densely hairy, three-lobed, with three seed. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields.
Croton glandulosus  
*tropic croton*

Summer annual. Similar to woolly croton, stems greenish, rough-hairy, but not woolly. Leaves oblong to egg-shaped, with toothed edges, on short stalks. Three seed borne in each three-lobed capsule. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields.

Euphorbia maculata  
*spotted spurge*

Summer annual. Erect, nodding, smooth, red stems with a milky juice. Leaves oblong, with toothed edges, purple spots near base of leaves. Flower clusters small, greenish, borne at ends of branches. Smooth, three-lobed seed pod. Found in cultivated fields, gardens, pastures, wastelands.

Geraniaceae  
*(Geranium family)*

Leaves alternate or opposite, lobed, dissected or compound. Pistil elongated into conspicuous style; capsule splits from bottom. Two genera, 15+ species.

Erodium cicutarium  
*redstem filaree*

Winter annual or biennial. Stems low, spreading or prostrate. Leaves alternate, pinnately compound. Flowers in clusters, pink to purple. Seed pod beaked. Found in feed lots, small grains, pastures.
**Geranium carolinianum**  
*Carolina geranium*

Winter annual or biennial. Smooth, erect, reddish stems, widely branching at base. Deeply cut leaves alternate or opposite. Compact flower clusters at tips of stems and branches. Small, pink flowers. Long, pointed seed pods. Found in lawns, gardens, pastures, cultivated fields.

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**Gramineae**  
(Grass family)

Herbs with hollow, rounded stems, nodes closed and hard, leaves alternate, two-ranked. Two sub-families, Poacoideae and Panicoideae. Fourteen tribes, 169+ genera, 1398+ species.

**Andropogon virginicus**  
*broomedge*

Perennial. Stems several from basal crown, three to five feet tall. Green to reddish-purple, turning to various tints of straw color upon maturity. Seed are borne with a pair of scales with five white, silky hairs. Found in abandoned fields, roadsides, unimproved pastures.

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**Brachiaria platyphylla**  
*broadleaf signalgrass*

Summer annual. Stems reclining, rooting at lower nodes, to two feet tall. Leaf blades relatively short, wide, smooth. Flower racemes two to six, usually three to five. Peculiar angle of terminal róceme tends to distinguish this genus. Found in cultivated fields, wastelands, ditches.
**Cynodon dactylon**  
**bermudagrass**

Perennial. Propagating by seed, surface-creeping stems (stolons) and rootstocks (rhizomes). Stolons flattened, hairless, bearing dead leaf sheaths at each joint. Rhizomes hard, scaly, sharp-pointed. Flowering stems erect, bearing finger-like flower clusters. Found in lawns, cultivated and abandoned fields, roadsides, fencerows. Many selections and hybrids provide excellent turf and forage.

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**Dactyloctenium aegyptium**  
**crowfootgrass**

Summer annual. Stems spreading and branching, rooting at nodes to form radial mats. Seed heads with two to five short, thick spikes, widely spreading, finger-like from stem ends. Differs from *Eleusine indica* by rachilla projecting in a point beyond spikelets. Found in cultivated fields, fencerows, lawns.

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**Digitaria sanguinalis**  
**large crabgrass**

Summer annual. Stems stout, smooth; when prostrate, rooting at nodes. Leaves hairy, leaf sheaths long-hairy. Flowers and seed borne on 3 to 10 finger-like racemes at the ends of stems. Found everywhere.
**Cenchrus pauciflorus**  
field sandbur

Summer annual. Stems erect or spreading, rooting at lower nodes, \( \frac{1}{2} \) foot to two feet tall. Leaves smooth but twisted or wrinkled, two to six inches long. Floral spike short, spikelets enclosed in sharp, spiny burs, with two to three seed. Found in cultivated fields, roadsides, fencerows, lawns.

**Panicum repens**  
torpedogras

Perennial. Stems stiff, one to three feet tall, erect from nodes of robust, horizontal, creeping rhizomes. Rhizomes covered at base with leafless, hairy sheaths. Leaves flat or folded. Panicle open. Found on sandy soils, beaches, citrus groves, cultivated fields and wastelands.

**Panicum texanum**  
Texas panicum

Summer annual. Many robust stems erect to decumbent, rooting at nodes. Pale or yellowish-green leaves with velvety hairiness, extending to leaf sheaths and nodes. Panicle closed, but not tight. Seed large, marked with green, vertical stripes, resembling cultivated millets. Found in cultivated fields and abandoned fields.
**Paspalum urvillei**

*Vaseygrass*

Perennial. Stems from large clumps, erect, two to six feet tall. Leaf sheaths coarsely hairy at base. Panicle erect, racemes ascending, crowded. Found in ditches, roadsides, wastelands or generally moist soils.

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**Poa annua**

*Annual bluegrass*

Winter annual. Stems three to six inches tall, flattened, decumbent at the base. Leaves very soft, light green, tips boat-shaped. Found in lawns, cultivated land, wasteland.

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**Setaria sp.**

*Foxtail*

Summer annual. Stems erect, one to two feet tall. Leaves flat, some with spiral twist, many long hairs on upper surface near base. Panicle dense, erect, spikelets with five or more bristles. Found in cultivated fields, roadsides, ditchbanks, fencerows.
**Sorghum halepense**  
*johnsongrass*


**Sporobolus poiretii**  
*smutgrass*

Perennial. Stems erect, single or several from crown, to four feet tall. Leaves flat to rolled, firm, wide at base and tapering to a fine point. Flower head compact, slim, 4 to 24 inches long. Ergot-infested seed cause seed heads to leave black marks on trousers, hence the common name. Found in pastures and uncultivated areas.

**Labiatae**  
_(Mint family)_

Herbs often with square stems (four-angled), opposite, aromatic leaves. Fruit four seed-like nutlets. Thirty-nine+ genera, 145+ species. Common genera: Glechoma, Lamium, Salvia.

**Lamium amplexicaule**  
*henbit*

Winter annual. Stems square, four to six inches tall, nearly smooth. Slightly hairy leaves, rounded in outline, edges deeply scalloped, opposite. Purple or reddish-purple flowers borne at base of upper leaves. Found in grain fields, lawns, gardens, pastures, wastelands.
Stachys floridana

Florida betony

Perennial. Stems four-angled, 6 to 20 inches tall, from large, white, ring-constricted tubers. Leaves opposite, toothed, elliptic, hairy. Flowers in panicles, white to pink to purple, two-lipped. Plant spreads by seed and tubers. Found in ornamental nurseries, lawns and other horticultural areas.

Leguminosae

(Legume family)


Cassia fasciculata

partridge pea


Cassia obtusifolia

sicklepod

Summer annual. Stems erect, branching, one to six feet tall. Light green leaves of two to three pairs of bluntly oval leaflets. Yellow flowers borne on drooping stalks in leaf axils. Long, slender, round seed pods with many brownish, angular seed. Found in cultivated and abandoned lands. Cassia occidentalis (on left) more numerous, pointed leaflets, seed pods flattened.
**Crotalaria spectabilis**  
*showy crotalaria*


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**Desmodium tortuosum**  
*Florida beggarweed*

Summer annual. Stems erect, reddish-purple, three to nine feet tall, hairy. Trifoliate leaves three to four inches long, light- or yellowish-green. Stems marked with light green bands at leaf axils. Leaves hairy. Flower clusters of pea-like blooms producing jointed pods which break into pieces with one seed. Hairs on pod segments stick onto clothing and animals. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields, waste areas.

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**Pueraria lobata**  
*kudzu*

Perennial. Woody vines with heavy, brownish, hairy stems, twining. Leaves trifoliate, three to six inches long. Flowers purple, in small, showy racemes. Seed pods small, long, covered with brown hairs. Found in abandoned fields, gullies, ditches, woodlands. Introduced as forage plant; now escaped and a serious pest.
**Sesbania exaltata**  
*Hemp Sesbania*  
Summer annual. Stem green, becoming woody, three to eight feet tall. Leaves pinnately compound, numerous leaflets, alternate. Flowers yellow, dotted with purple. Seed pods elongate, cylindrical, curved. Found in cultivated fields with wet, fertile soils.

**Vicia dasycarpa**  
*Smooth Vetch*  
Winter annual. Vines or stems smooth, weak, with tendrils at leaf tips. Leaves compound with 8 to 12 leaflets. Flowers purple, with 4 to 12 flowers per raceme. Pods smooth, seed olive to brownish-black. Found in fields and wastelands.

**Liliaceae**  
*(Lily family)*  

**Allium vineale**  
*Wild Garlic*  
Perennial. Stem with two to three hollow, round leaves from base of plant. Plant develops from basal bulb, covered with a thin, whitish, papery coat. At maturity, the bulb is covered with small, yellowish bulbs which readily split apart. Flowers are greenish-pink to purplish, often among small, greenish, aerial bulblets. Found in lawns, fencerows, pastures, small grain.
**Smilax rotundifolia**

common greenbriar

Perennial. Vine or stems woody, with tendrils, from deep, woody, gnarled rootstocks. Stems with scattered thorns. Leaves alternate, smooth, bright green, almost round in outline. Male and female flowers in umbels on stalks from leaf axils, producing bloom-covered, blue-black berries. Found in open woods, fencerows, thickets.

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**Malvaceae**

(Mallow family)

Herbs or shrubs with tough bark, alternate leaves. Twelve genera, 35+ species. Common genera: Althaea, Sida, Hibiscus.

**Sida spinosa**

prickly sida

Summer annual. Deep taproot, stems branched, 1/2 foot to three feet tall, softly hairy. Leaves oval, with sawtooth edges, softly hairy. Flowers with five showy petals. Seed pods cup-like, with 10 seed arranged in a circle. Seed triangular, one side rounded, with two beaks or horns when split. Found in cultivated fields, fencerows, pastures, gardens.

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**Onagraceae**

(Eveningprimrose family)

Herbs with alternate or opposite leaves, conspicuous four-angled ovary. Seven genera, 60+ species.

**Oenothera laciniata**

cutleaf eveningprimrose

Annual. Hairy stems branching at base, reclining. Leaves long, narrow, coarsely toothed, deeply cut near base. Yellow flowers with five heart-shaped petals on long stalks with enlarged base. Cylindrical, four-ribbed seed pod, many yellow seed. Found in cultivated fields, pastures, small grains, roadsides.
Opuntiaceae
(Cactus family)


Opuntia sp.
prickly pear

Oxalidaceae
(Woodsorrel family)

Herbs with sour juice. Alternate leaves, one- or three-foliate, notched at the top. Four genera, 19+ species. Common genus: Oxalis.

Oxalis stricta
common yellow woodsorrel
Annual. Stems weak, branched at base, may root at joints. Leaves with long petioles, three leaflets notched at top, folded, heart-shaped. Stems and leaves sour-tasting. Flowers with five yellow petals, in clusters. Seed pods 1/2 to one inch long, five-ridged, pointed. Found in lawns, pastures, wastelands.

Passifloraceae
(Passionflower family)


Passiflora incarnata
maypop passionflower
Perennial. Stems trailing or climbing by tendrils. Leaves alternate, cut into three or four deep lobes. Variegated purple, showy flowers, with numerous frilly petals. Fruit resembles small melon, pops with pressure. Found in wastelands, cultivated fields.
Phytolaccaceae
(Pokeweed family)

Alternate entire leaves, fruit a berry. One genus, one species. Common genus: Phytolacca.

*Phytolacca americana*
pokeberry

Perennial. Large taproot, heavy, reddish-purple, branched stems three to nine feet tall, becoming woody. Alternate, large, smooth leaves. Flowers small, white. Dark purple fruits with crimson juice, small, shiny black seed. Young shoots edible, but old leaves, roots and berries considered poisonous. Found in fencerows, cultivated and abandoned land.

Plantaginaceae
(Plantain family)

Herbs with leafless stems, leaves often sheathing, flowers in bracts, many flowers on spike. Two genera, 17+ species. Common genus: Plantago.

*Plantago aristata*
bracted plantain

Winter annual. Stems erect, hairy, unbranched, 2 to 14 inches tall, leafless, with flower cluster. Leaves long, narrow, hairy, from base of plant. Small flowers borne in dense, tapering cluster resembling bottle brush. Found on unproductive soils and waste areas.

*Plantago lanceolata*
buckhorn plantain

Perennial. Stems erect, hairy, leafless, with dense, tapered flower spike. Leaves longer and broader than bracted plantain, ribbed on upper surface, in basal rosette. Found in lawns, pastures, roadsides, wastelands.
**Plantago major**

broadleaf plantain

Perennial. Stems erect, leafless, with flower spike. Leaves broad, egg-shaped, showy veins. Blackseed plantain (*Plantago rugelii*) is similar, except stems and petioles longer, purple color at base of petioles. Found in lawns and waste areas.

**Polygonaceae**

(Buckwheat family)


**Polygonum sp.**

knotweed

Summer annual. Stems blue-green, wiry, prostrate, forming a dense mat, nodes covered with thin, papery sheath. Leaves alternate, flowers very small, pink or white, in clusters in the leaf axils. Found in heavy traffic areas in lawns, waste places, roadsides or paths.

**Polygonum pensylvanicum**

Pennsylvania smartweed

Summer annual. Stems smooth, swollen at nodes, branching, one to four feet tall. Leaves smooth, pointed, alternate, with sheath at base surrounding stem. Flowers pink or rose, on short spike.Seed smooth, shiny black. Found in cultivated fields, ditches, wastelands.
**Rumex acetosella**

*red sorrel*

Perennial. Shallow rootstocks, stems 1/2 foot to two feet tall, slender, branched near tops, several stems per crown. Leaves arrow-shaped, one to three inches long, acid or sour taste. Flowers yellowish to red on raceme. Male and female flowers on separate plants. Found in lawns, pastures, abandoned fields.

**Brunnichia cirrhosa**

*redvine*


**Rumex crispus**

*curly dock*

Perennial. Large, yellow taproot. Stems smooth, erect, one to four feet tall, one or more from root crown. Leaves mostly basal, lance-shaped, with wavy-curly edges. Flowers in dense clusters at stem tip, green, becoming reddish-brown. Seed shiny black, triangular. Found in pastures, roadsides, wastelands.
Rumex obtusifolius
broadleaf dock
Perennial. Similar to curly dock, except leaves broad, flat, with heart-shaped base. Bracts covering seed have toothed edges. Found in roadsides, pastures, wastelands.

Polypodiaceae
(Fern family)

Pteridium aquilinum
Eastern bracken
Perennial. Thick, black, scaly rootstocks, with fronds of many branches, with numerous segmented leaflets. Spores borne underneath leaflets. Found in pastures, open woodlands. Poisonous plant, not grazed except when forage is scarce.

Portulacaceae
(Purslane family)
Fleshy or succulent herbs, opposite or alternate, entire leaves. Three genera, 13+ species. Common genus: Portulaca.

Portulaca oleracea
common purslane
Summer annual. Stems succulent, smooth, reddish, branched, prostrate in mats. Leaves alternate or clustered, juicy, smooth, thick. Flowers small, yellow, in axils of leaves. Many tiny, black seed borne in capsule, which splits around middle. Found in fields and waste places. Drought-resistant, hard to kill.
Ranunculaceae
(Crowfoot family)


*Ranunculus sp.*

*buttercup*

Winter annual. Stems slender, branched from base. Lower leaves round, bright green, on long petioles. Upper leaves on short petioles, divided into leaflets. Flowers small, yellow. Seed on round heads, flattened, with curved or hooked beak. Poisonous, acrid. Found in lowland pastures.

Rosaceae
(Rose family)

Plants with many stamens and pistils, leaves alternate, with stipules. Family characteristics diverse. Twenty-seven genera, 550+ species. Common genera: Spiraea, Pyrus, Crataegus, Rubus, Rosa, Prunus, Fragaria.

*Rubus sp.*

*blackberry*

Biennial. Erect or trailing, woody stems with thorns. Leaves rough, small thorns on underside of mid-vein, green above, silvery-green below. Flowers usually solitary, white and showy. Fruit many-seeded, red to black. Found in pastures, roadsides, fencerows and uncultivated lands.

Rubiaceae
(Madder family)


*Diodia teres*

*poorjoe*

Summer annual. Coarse, hairy, reddish, branching stems 1/2 to one foot long, declining. Leaves opposite, rough, narrow, pointed, no petiole. Flowers small, tubular, pink, at leaf axils. Virginia buttonweed (*Diodia virginiana*) is similar to poorjoe, but perennial, coarser stems and leaves, larger seed pods. Found in lawns, moist pastures, ditches, waste areas.
**Richardia scabra**  
*Florida pusley*  
Summer annual. Weak stems, much branched, prostrate, ascending. Leaves opposite, one to three inches, oval, thickened. Tubular, white flowers crowded in leaf axils. Found in cultivated and abandoned fields, roadsides, gardens. Occasionally grazed, a honey plant.

**Scrophulariaceae**  
*(Figwort family)*


**Striga lutea**  
*witchweed*  
Annual. Parasite seedling penetrates roots of host plant (grasses), produces stems 1/2 foot to 1 1/2 feet tall. Leaves slightly hairy, small, bright green. Flowers small, irregular, usually brick red or scarlet, to yellow or white. Localized to Coastal Plains of North Carolina and South Carolina.

**Verbascum thapsus**  
*common mullein*  
Biennial. Stem not branched, three to six feet tall, woolly. Leaves pale grayish-green due to dense, woolly hairs. Yellow flowers crowded into long spike or club-like cluster. Found in unimproved pastures, roadsides, open wastelands.
Solanaceae
(Nightshade family)


**Datura stramonium**
jimsonweed

Summer annual. Erect, thick, green to reddish stems, one to five feet tall, branching, strong odor. Large, whitish flowers on short stalks in forks of branches and leaf axils. Large, egg-shaped, spiny seed pods. Seed and seedlings poisonous to swine. Found in feed lots, cultivated fields and wastelands.

**Physalis subglabrata**
smooth groundcherry

Perennial. Stems smooth, with purple spots, erect, branching, one to two feet tall. Leaves alternate, oval, smooth. Flowers bell-shaped, light yellow, with brownish-purple center. Fruit a round berry enclosed by extended, papery sepals. Found in cultivated and abandoned lands, gardens.

**Solanum carolinense**
horsenettle

Perennial. Extensive, deep, creeping rootstocks. Stems single or branched, one to two feet tall. Leaves alternate, wavy edges or lobed, with yellow spines on leaf mid-ribs, veins and stems. Purplish or white flowers in clusters from stem ends. Smooth, large, yellowish-orange berries. Found in cultivated fields and wastelands, pastures, roadsides.
**Solanum elaeagnifolium**  
silverleaf nightshade  
Perennial. Stem one to three feet tall, spiny, from deep, creeping rootstocks. Leaves covered with densely matted star-like hairs, giving a silvery color. Leaves, and leaf and flower stalks bear yellow spines. Leaves alternate, margins smooth to wavy. Flowers violet to blue, with round, dull yellow to yellow-orange seed pods. Found in western irrigated lands, roadsides, waste places.

**Solanum nigrum**  
black nightshade  
Summer annual. Erect, smooth stems 1/2 foot to three feet tall, branched. Leaves smooth, egg-shaped, with slightly toothed edges, alternate. Flowers in small, hanging clusters on long stalks attached to middle of branches between leaves, white; small, round, smooth, black berries. Found in cultivated lands, fencerows, gardens.

**Umbelliferae**  
(Parsley family)  
Often aromatic herbs with small flowers in umbels, leaf petioles usually sheathing. Forty-six genera, 80+ species.  
Common genera: Hydrocotyle, Conium, Cicuta, Daucus.

**Daucus carota**  
wild carrot  
Biennial. Fleshy, white taproot, shaped like carrot. Stems 11/2 to four feet tall, hollow. Leaves alternate, compound, with sheath-like petioles. Flowers in dense, flat or concave clusters at ends of stems and branches, white or pinkish. Found in old fields, roadsides, fencerows.
Verbenaceae
(Vervain family)

Herbs with opposite leaves, ovary not deeply four-lobed as in Labiatae, plants seldom aromatic. Three genera, 16+ species. Common genus: Verbena.

*Verbena rigida*

prostrate vervain


*Verbena hastata*

blue vervain


Vitaceae
(trape family)

Trailing or climbing, woody vives with tendrils, leaves alternate, compound. Five genera, 22+ species. Common genera: Vitis, Muscadinia, Cissus, Ampelopsis, Parthenocissus.

*Ampelopsis arborea*

peppervine

Perennial. Woody vine with or without tendrils. Leaves two to three times divided, leaflets toothed on edges. Flower clusters in axils of upper leaves, greenish. Young leaves and stems coppery-red. Black berry with two to four seed. Found in fencerows, gardens, woods.
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>swinecress</td>
<td>Coronopus didymus</td>
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<tr>
<td>tall morningglory</td>
<td>Ipomoea purpurea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas panicum</td>
<td>Panicum texanum</td>
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<tr>
<td>torpedograss</td>
<td>Panicum repens</td>
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<tr>
<td>tropic croton</td>
<td>Croton glandulosus</td>
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<tr>
<td>trumpet creeper</td>
<td>Campsis radicans</td>
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<tr>
<td>vaseygrass</td>
<td>Paspalum urvillei</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia copperleaf</td>
<td>Acalypha virginica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia pepperweed</td>
<td>Lepidium virginicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>whiteheath aster</td>
<td>Aster pilosus</td>
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<td>wild carrot</td>
<td>Daucus carota</td>
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<td>wild cucumber</td>
<td>Echinocystis lobata</td>
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<td>Allium vineale</td>
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<td>Lactuca scariola</td>
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<tr>
<td>wild mustard</td>
<td>Brassica kaber</td>
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<tr>
<td>wild watermelon (citron)</td>
<td>Citrullus vulgaris</td>
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<tr>
<td>witchweed</td>
<td>Striga Tulea</td>
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<tr>
<td>woolly croton</td>
<td>Croton capitatus</td>
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<tr>
<td>yellow nutsedge</td>
<td>Cyperus esculentus</td>
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