

A good garden may have some weeds.

~Thomas Fuller

Even the richest soil, if left uncultivated
will produce the rankest weeds.

~Leonardo da Vinci

I learn more about God
From weeds than from roses;
Resilience springing
Through the smallest chink of hope
In the absolute of concrete....

~Phillip Pulfrey, "Weeds," *Perspectives*, www.originals.net



Weed Identification and Biology

Weed Identification

You can't completely control weeds



Regents of the University

C060-02



Spotted Spurge



Blessed Milk Thistle



Dandelion

until you know what they are!



Common Groundsel



Annual Bluegrass



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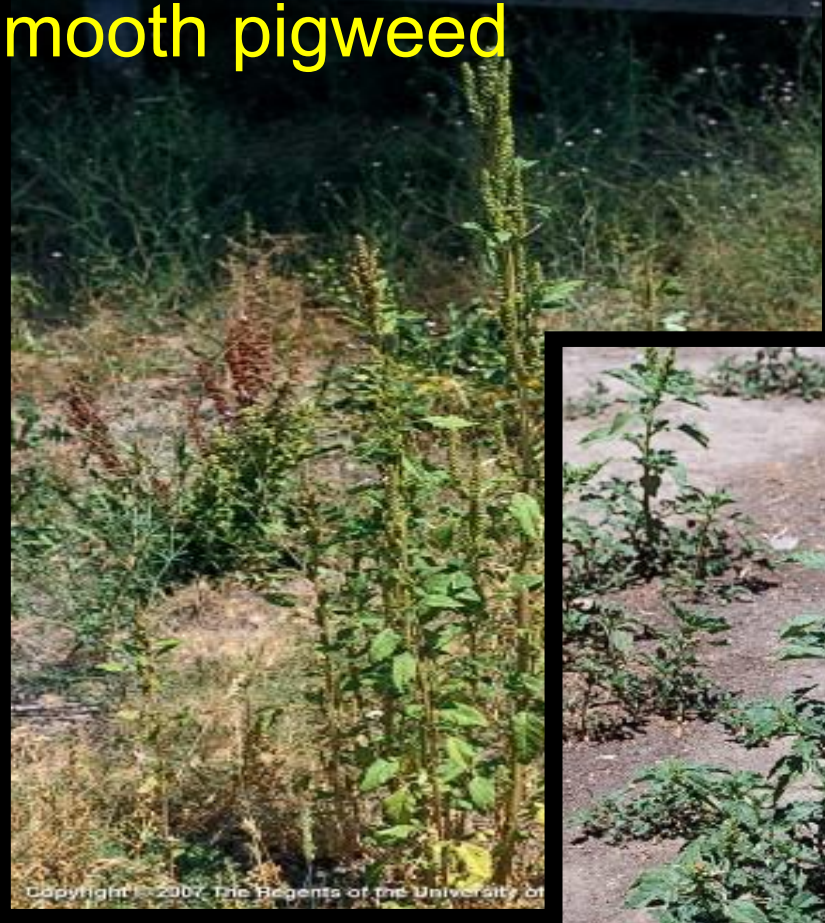
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C004-13

Smooth pigweed



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C004-0

Low amaranth



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C003-09

Redroot pigweed



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C004-09

How to Identify Weeds

How to Identify Weeds

- Use Keys-



The Jepson Manual
HIGHER PLANTS OF
CALIFORNIA



MUNZ

A
California
FLORA
and
Supplement

California

How to Identify Weeds

- Use Keys-plus pictures- good if you know 'family' characteristics

New!

Weeds of California and Other Western States

This encyclopedic yet easy-to-use guide covers 262 individual entries, including a full description of 451 species and another 361 plants compared as similar species, representing 63 plant families.

13 Shortcut Identification Tables for groups that share similar, unusual, or relatively uncommon characteristics

2 grass identification keys - a key to all characteristics including inflorescences and reproductive parts and a key to vegetative characteristics only

67 tables comparing important characteristics of difficult-to-distinguish weedy species

Color photos of over 700 weeds including seeds, seedlings, flowers, and mature plants

CD of all of the photographs from the book suitable for use in PowerPoint presentations - over 3000 images!

Appendix of non-native plants rarely or occasionally naturalized in California

Glossary of botanical terms

Bibliography of some of the most pertinent publications

Index to common names, scientific names, and synonyms

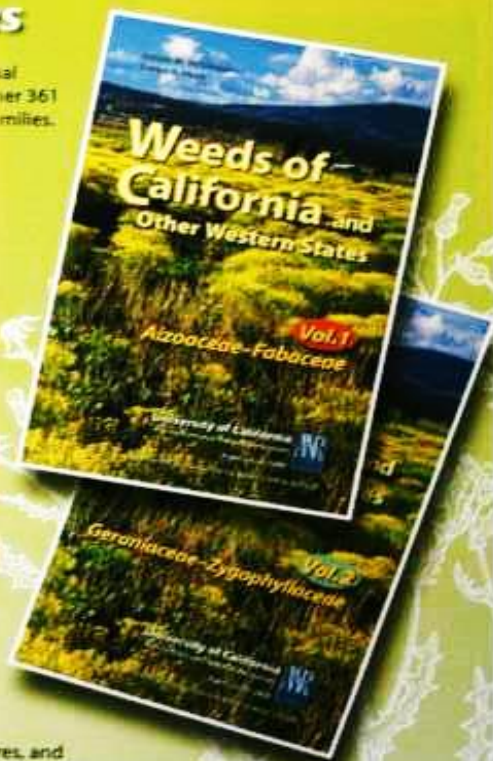
Each entry describes the plant category, family name, common name, and synonyms, along with a summary of the important aspects of the plant's life cycle, size, growth form, impact, method of introduction, and toxicity. You'll also find a description of the seedling, mature plant, roots and underground structures, flowers, fruits and seeds, spikelets and florets, spore-bearing structures, and post senescence characteristics for each entry. Also includes a description of the habitat where each is typically found, distribution in California, other states, and worldwide, along with maximum elevation at which the species is found.

Rounding out each entry is a description of the methods of reproduction, seed dispersal, germination requirements and conditions, seed survival and longevity, early establishment characteristics and requirements, cultural practices and management options that have proven effective or ineffective in controlling infestations, and a notation of inclusion on federal or state noxious weed lists. 2007. 2 volumes. 848 pp. 912 pp.

3488 ISBN 978-1-879906-69-3! \$100.00

Call: **1-800-994-8849** or 510-642-2431 Click: <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu>

Or visit your local UC Cooperative Extension office



How to Identify Weeds

- Use on-line 'Expert' system



Weed Research & Information Center

**WRIC
Home**

**About
WRIC**

**Weed
Educ**

**Weed
Info**

**Weed
Sci
Prog**

**Useful
Links**

*This page was
updated on Friday
November 21 2008*

Weed Information

Choose an item from the drop-down menus below:

Links marked with an * will take you to a site away from UC WeedRIC.

👉 Weed identification tool

👉 Weed photos and information

👉 UC Pest Notes

University of California's official guidelines for pest monitoring techniques, pesticides, and nonpesticide alternatives for managing pests in homes and landscapes

👉 Weed control and herbicide information

👉 Poisonous plants



Weed Identification Tool

Home

Weed ID Tool

Weed Selector Tool

Weed Identification Tool

Search location:

Step 1: Select the type of weed you are trying to identify. You may change your choice of weed type, or restart the ID process at any time.

BROADLEAF:

These herbaceous (non-woody) plants typically produce noticeable flowers. Leaves are often broad with netted veins, but they may also be narrow and veinless.

GRASSLIKE:

These herbaceous (non-woody) plants lack noticeable flowers. The leaves are ribbon-like with parallel veins, and are often tightly rolled.

WOODY:

Trees, shrubs, and sub-shrubs with obvious woody stems that persist year after year.

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Trees, shrubs, and sub-shrubs with obvious woody stems that persist year after year.

Where was the weed found?

Agriculture field:

no selection

natural and grazed areas (non-crop):

no selection

Urban:

no selection

General characteristics

Growth Form:

no selection ?

Life Cycle:

no selection

Tendrils:

no selection

Produces milky sap:

no selection ?

Leaf characteristics

Leaf arrangement:

no selection

If leaf is simple:

no selection ?

If leaf is compound:

no selection ?

Leaf margin:

no selection ?

Petioles:

no selection ?

Leaf hairs:

no selection

Spines/thorns/prickles:

no selection

Leaf venation:

no selection

Stem characteristics

Stems square:

no selection ?

Leaves on flowering stems:

no selection ?

Spines/thorns/prickles:

no selection

Floral characteristics

Flower color:

no selection

Flower symmetry:

no selection ?

Spines/thorns/prickles:

no selection

search database

How do you identify weeds?

Broadleaves

Wide leaves



Branching veins



Oxalis

Sedges

Leaves in sets of 3

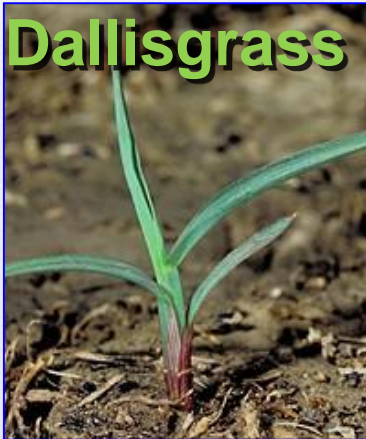


Triangular stems



Yellow nutsedge

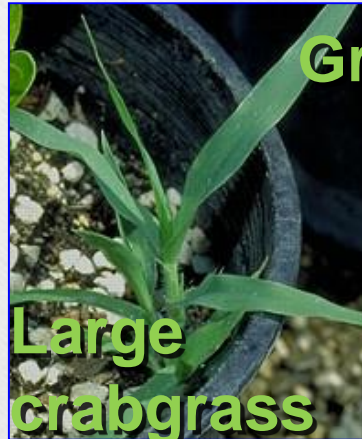
Dallisgrass



Grasses

Narrow leaves

Arranged in sets of 2



Large crabgrass

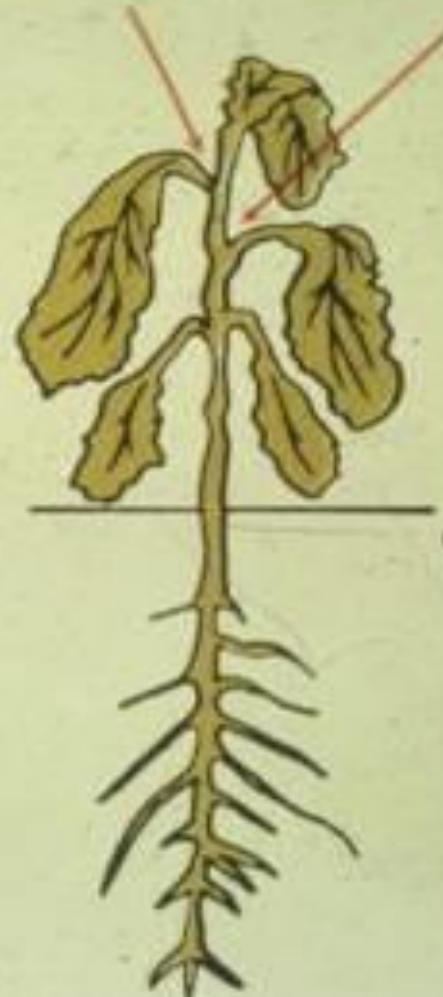


Parallel veins

Round or flat stems

Growing

Point



Broadleaf Weed Identification

Some weeds are easy to control when they are small



Still pretty easy...



C103-10

Even here, still pretty easy...



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C103-09

Here?, not so easy...



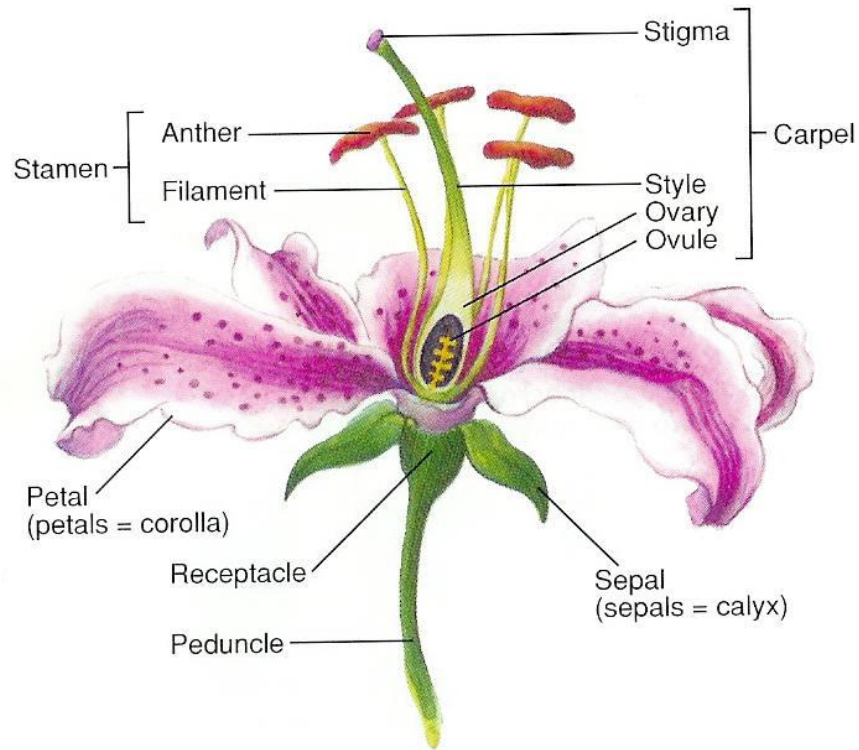
Now? Too late



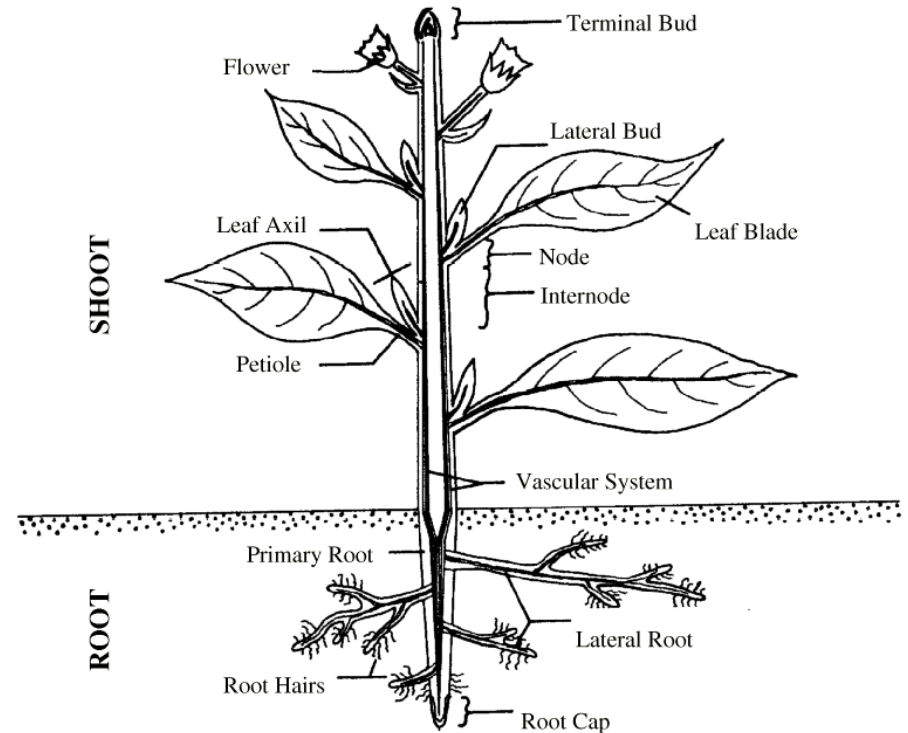
Worlds Fastest Weed-

Clocked at over 60 miles per hour!!!

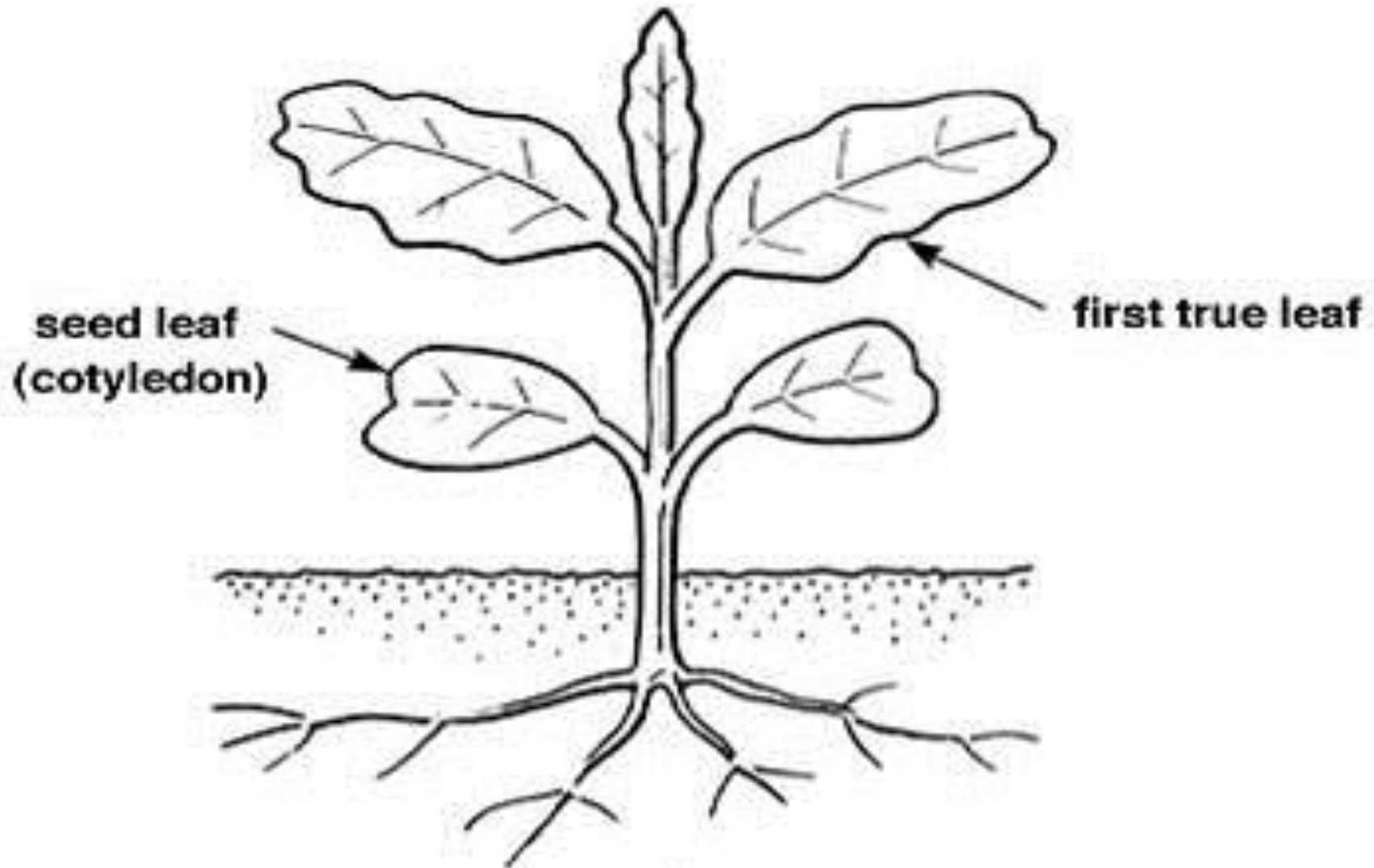
What a taxonomist uses to ID plants



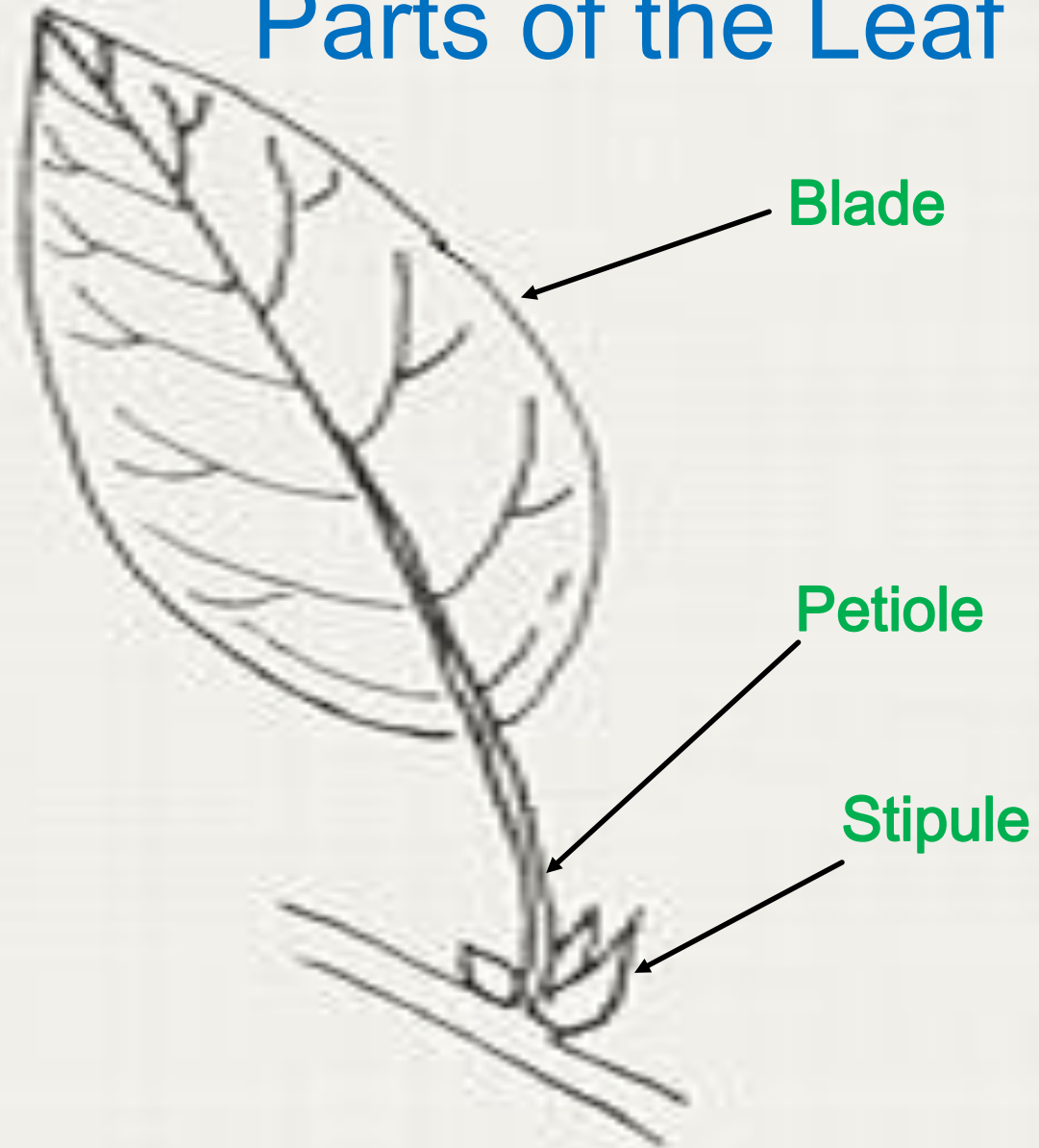
Principal Parts of a Vascular Plant



What a Weed Scientist uses to ID a Plant



Parts of the Leaf



Leaf type



Simple



Compound



Compound leaf

- Trifoliate



C136-17

- Pinnate leaves

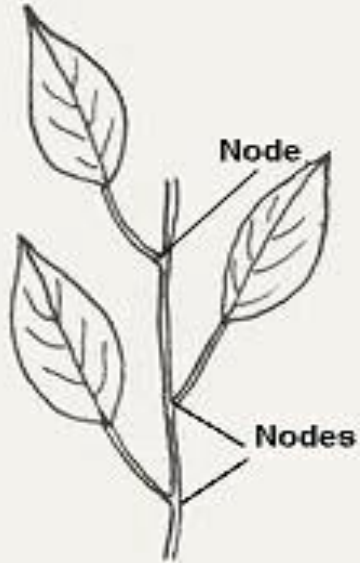


C022-13

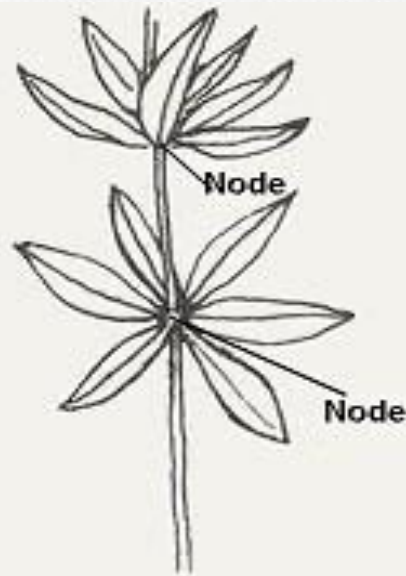
- Palmate leaves



Leaf arrangement



Alternate



Whorled



Opposite



Basal Rosette

True leaves may be arranged as **Alternate** or **Opposite** along the stem

Bedstraw-whorled



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C232-15

Dandelion-basal rosette



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C065-03

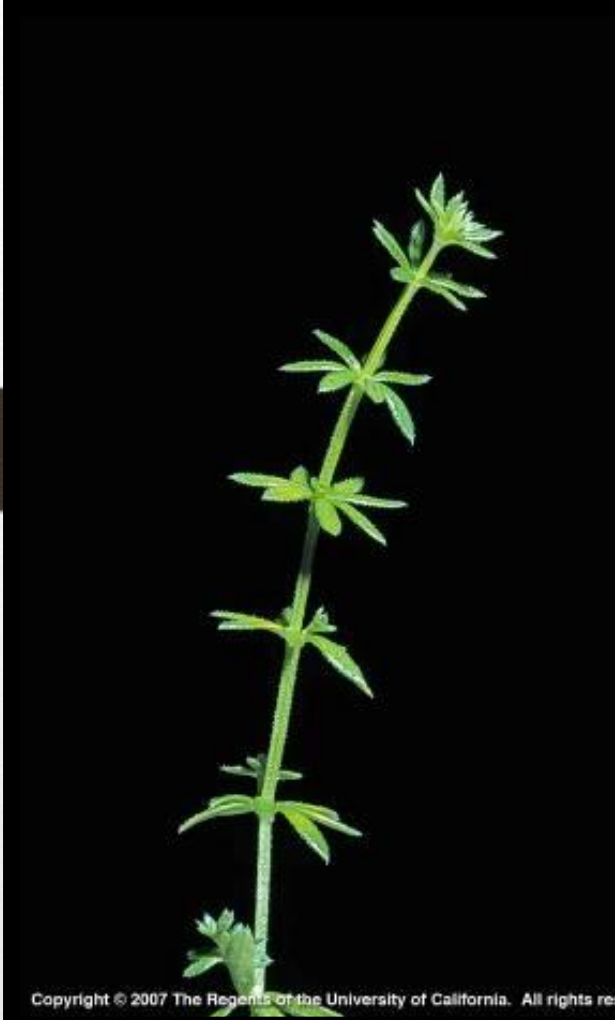
Chickweed-Leaves Opposite



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C092-13

Square stem



Leaf shapes



Dissected



Cordate
(heart-shaped)



Elliptic



Orbicular



Hastate
(arrowhead-shaped)



Reniform
(kidney-shaped)



Cuneate
(wedge-shaped)



Lanceolate



Linear



Oblong



Obovate



Ovate

Mustards Cotyledon leaves-Kidney shaped



side IPM Project
Regents, University of California

Bull mallow



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High mallow



Mallow family cotyledons are heart shaped

Velvetleaf



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Little mallow



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Why is it called 'Cheeseweed'?



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C155-13



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C155-13

Velvetleaf (*Abutilon theophrasti*) flower with immature fruit.



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C154-03

Leaf Margins



Entire



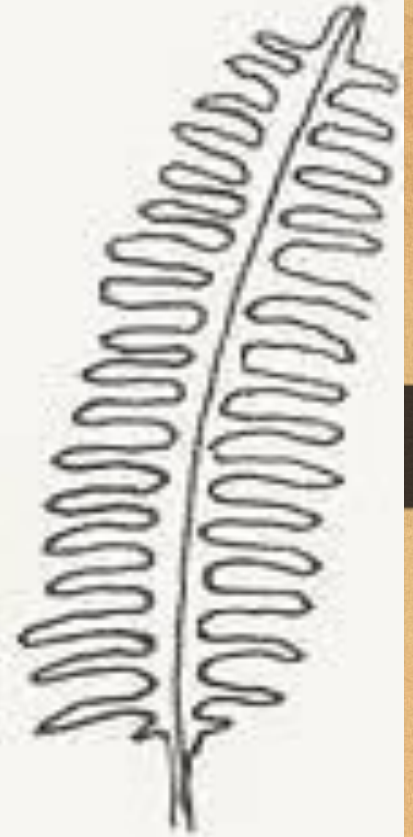
Crenate
(rounded)



Serrate
(toothed)



Lobed



Pinnatifid
(feathered)

Common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*) plant.



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C058-05



Prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*)

Deeply Lobed Leaves



C054-08

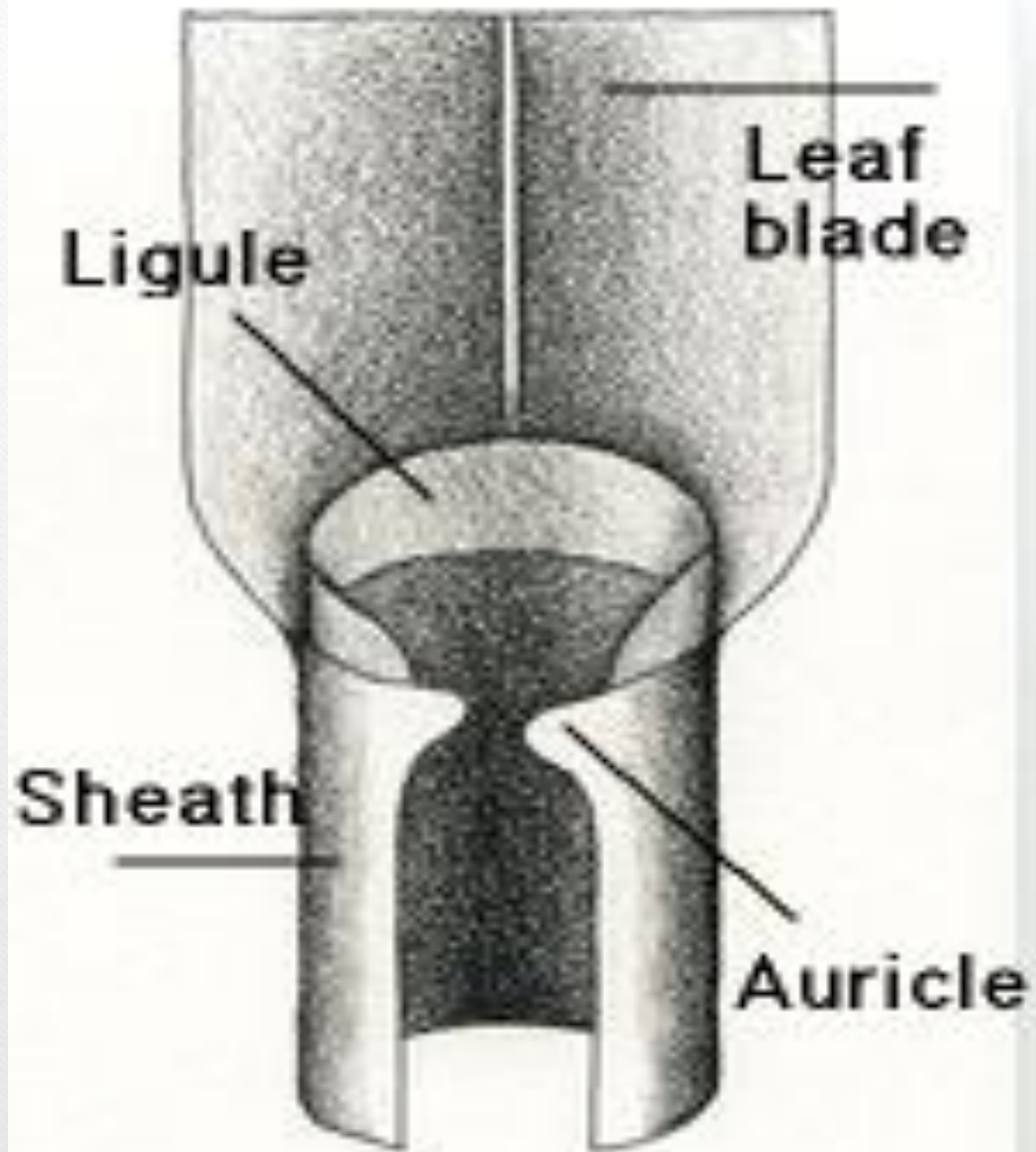
Not Deeply Lobed Leaves

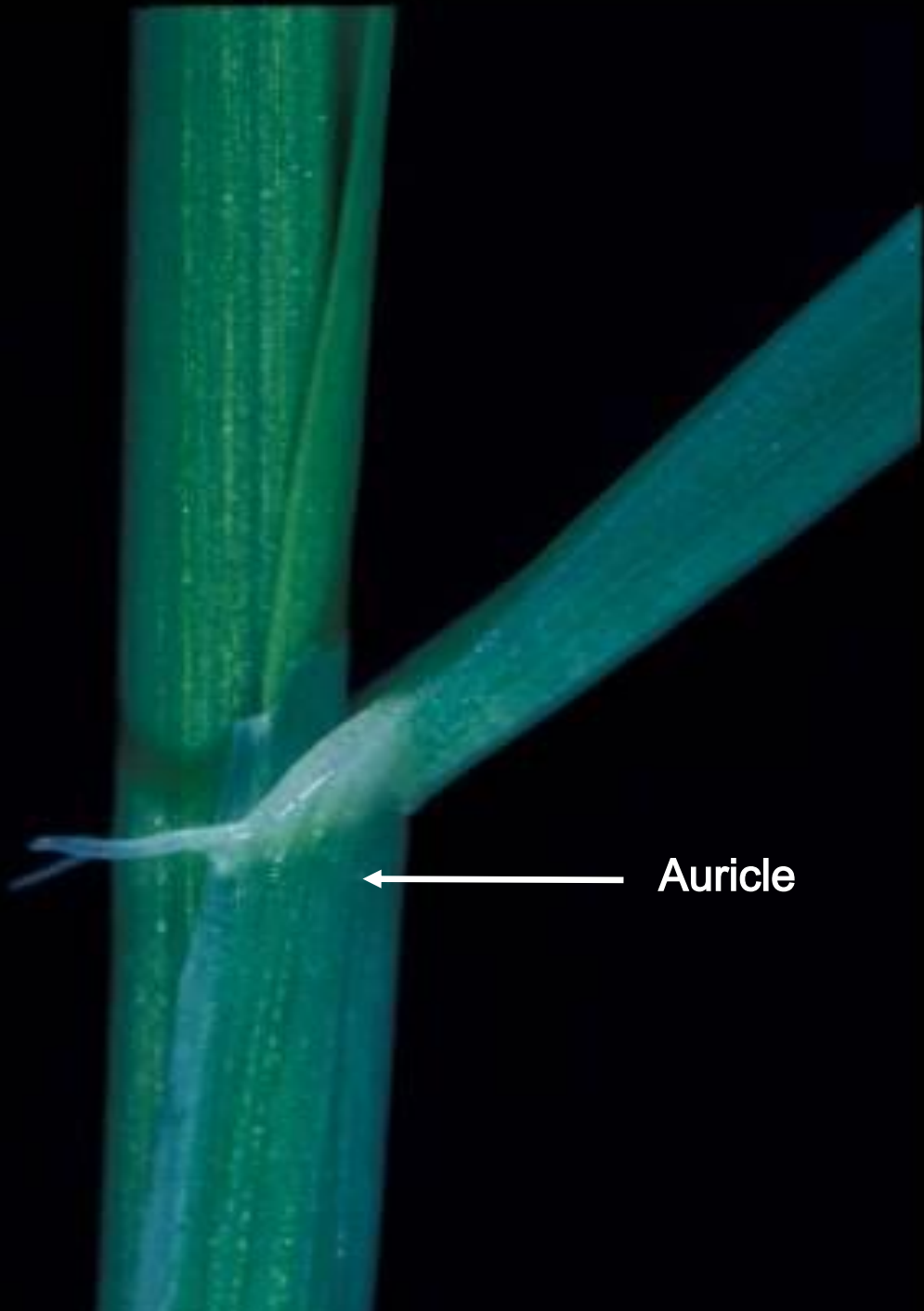
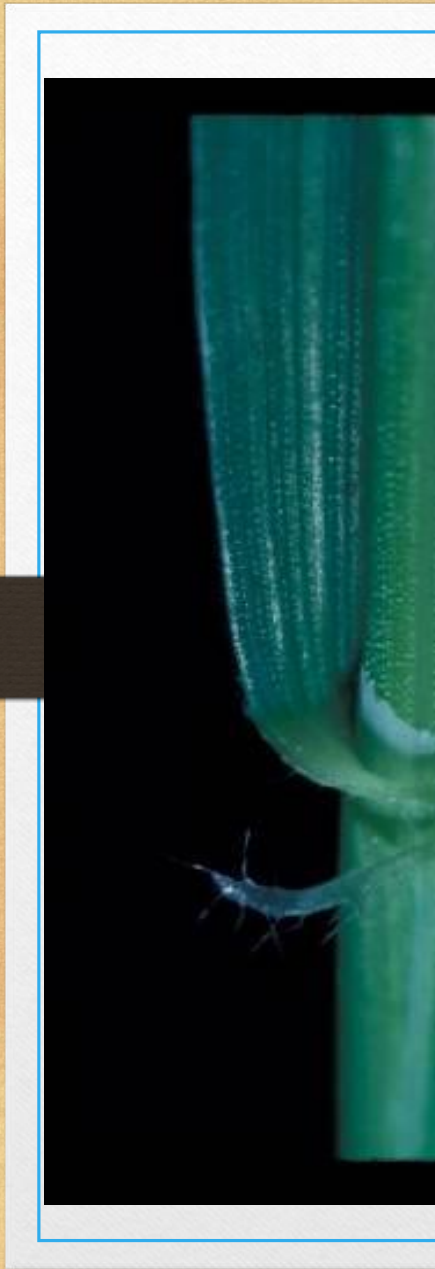


C054-10

Grass Identification

- The **leaf** is composed of the **sheath and blade**. The **sheath** encloses the **stem** and is connected to the blade at the junction found by the **collar**. The **collar** is located on the outer side of the leaf and the **ligule** is located on the inner side of the leaf. **Auricles** are the appendages projecting around the stem from both sides of the collar. **Joints** in the stem are called **nodes**. The part between any two nodes is called the **internode**





Auricle

Auricles

None

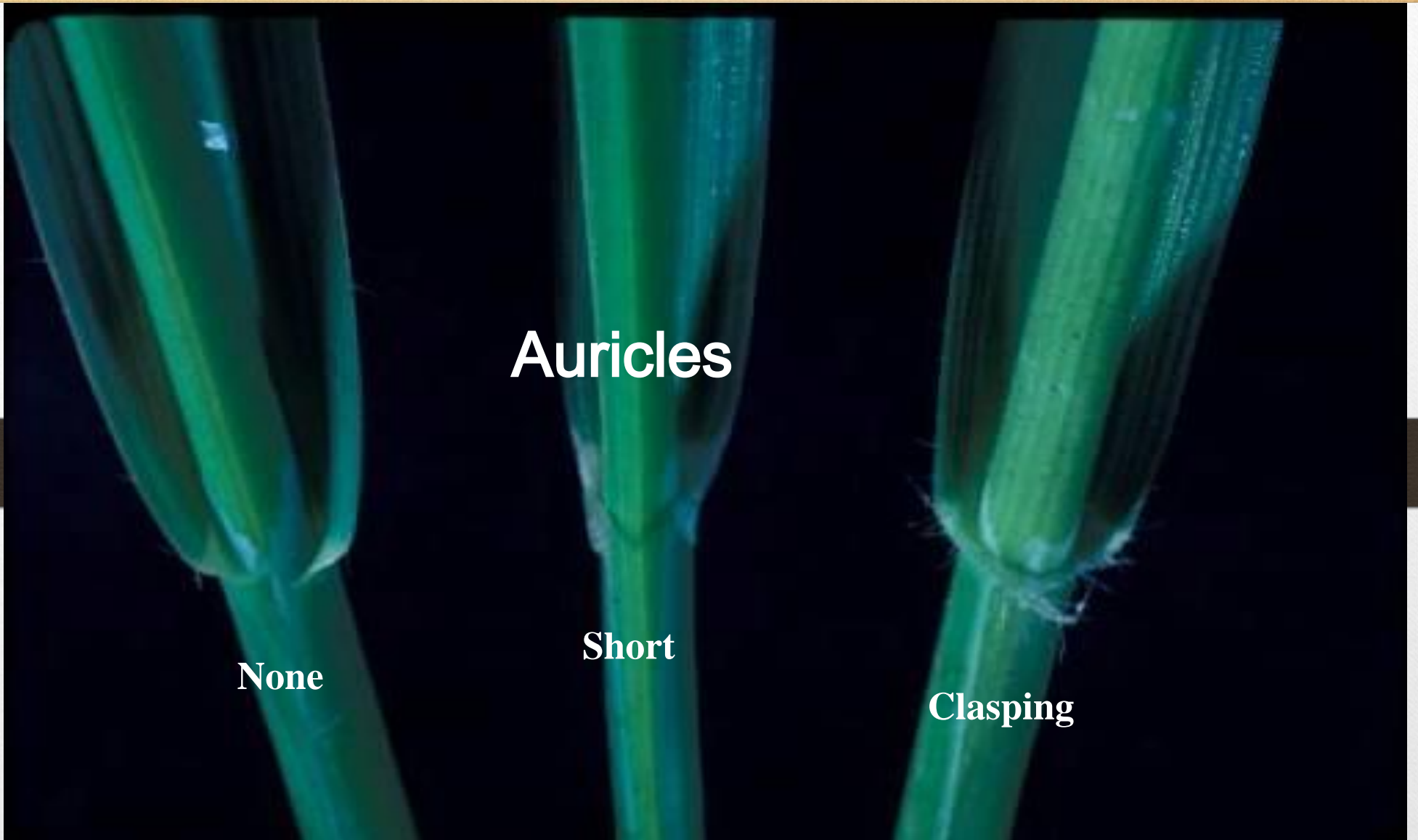
Short

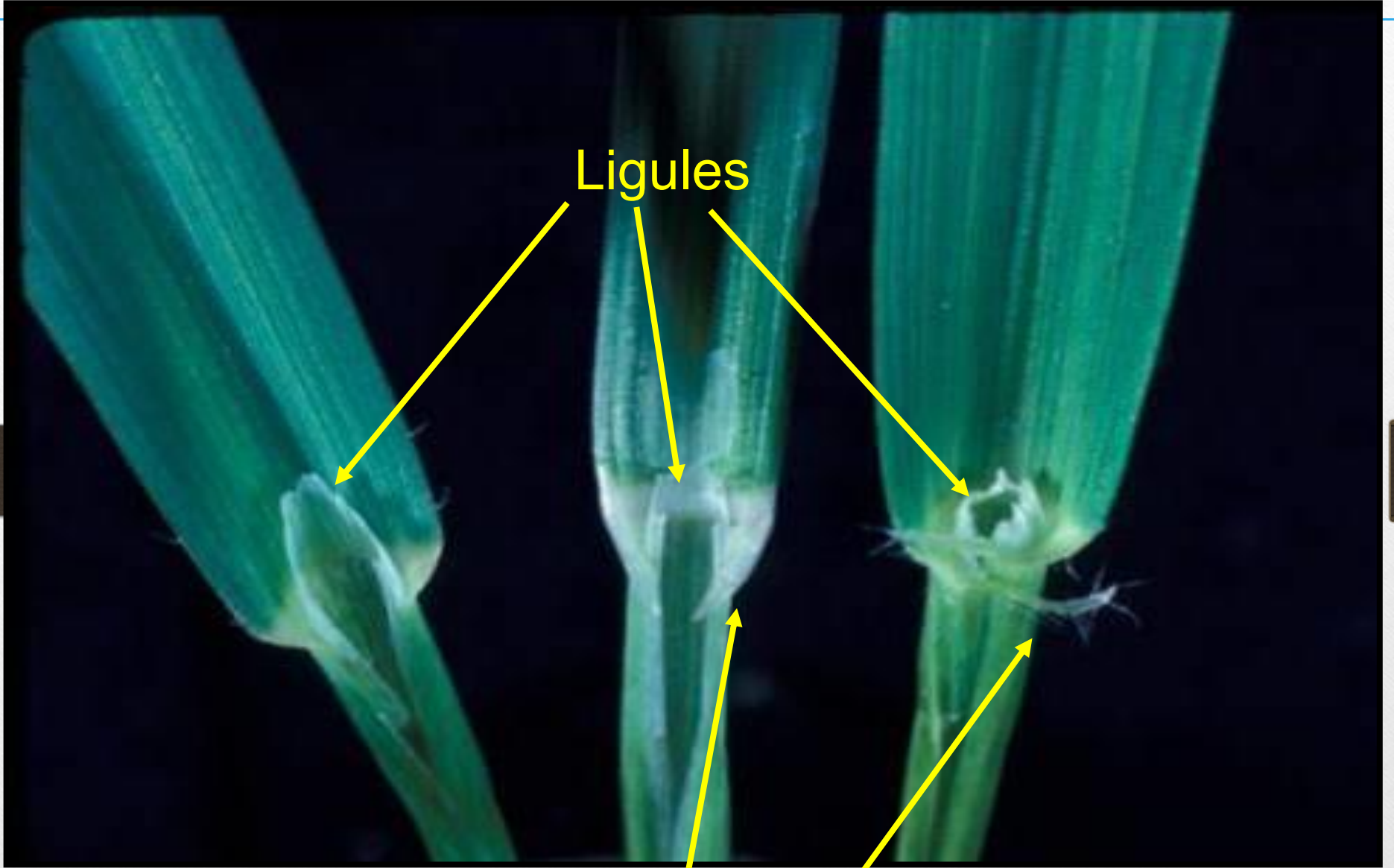
Clasping

Oats

Wheat

Barley

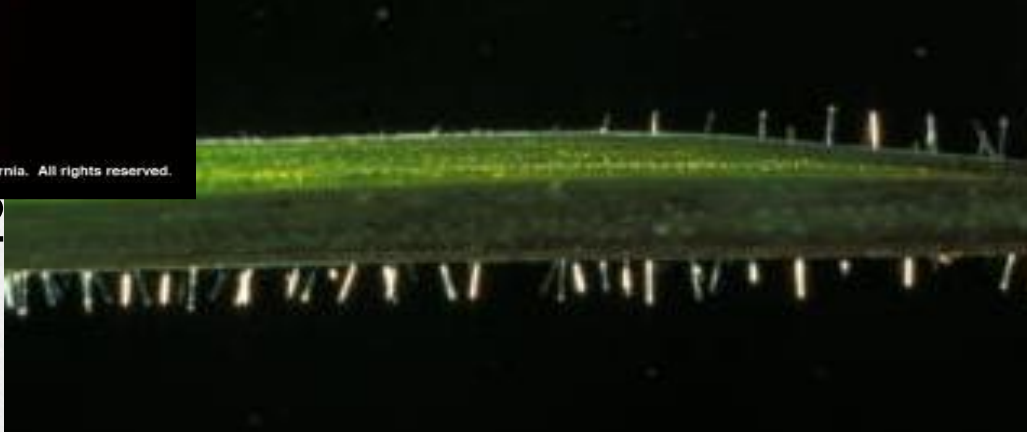
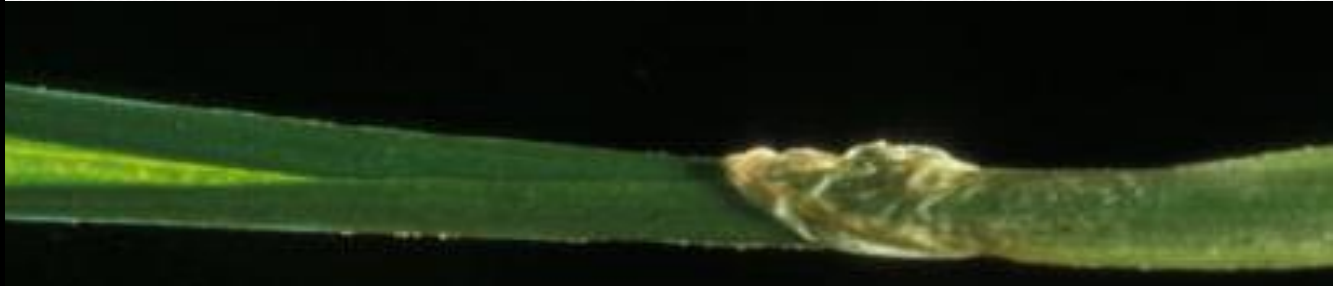




Ligules

Auricles

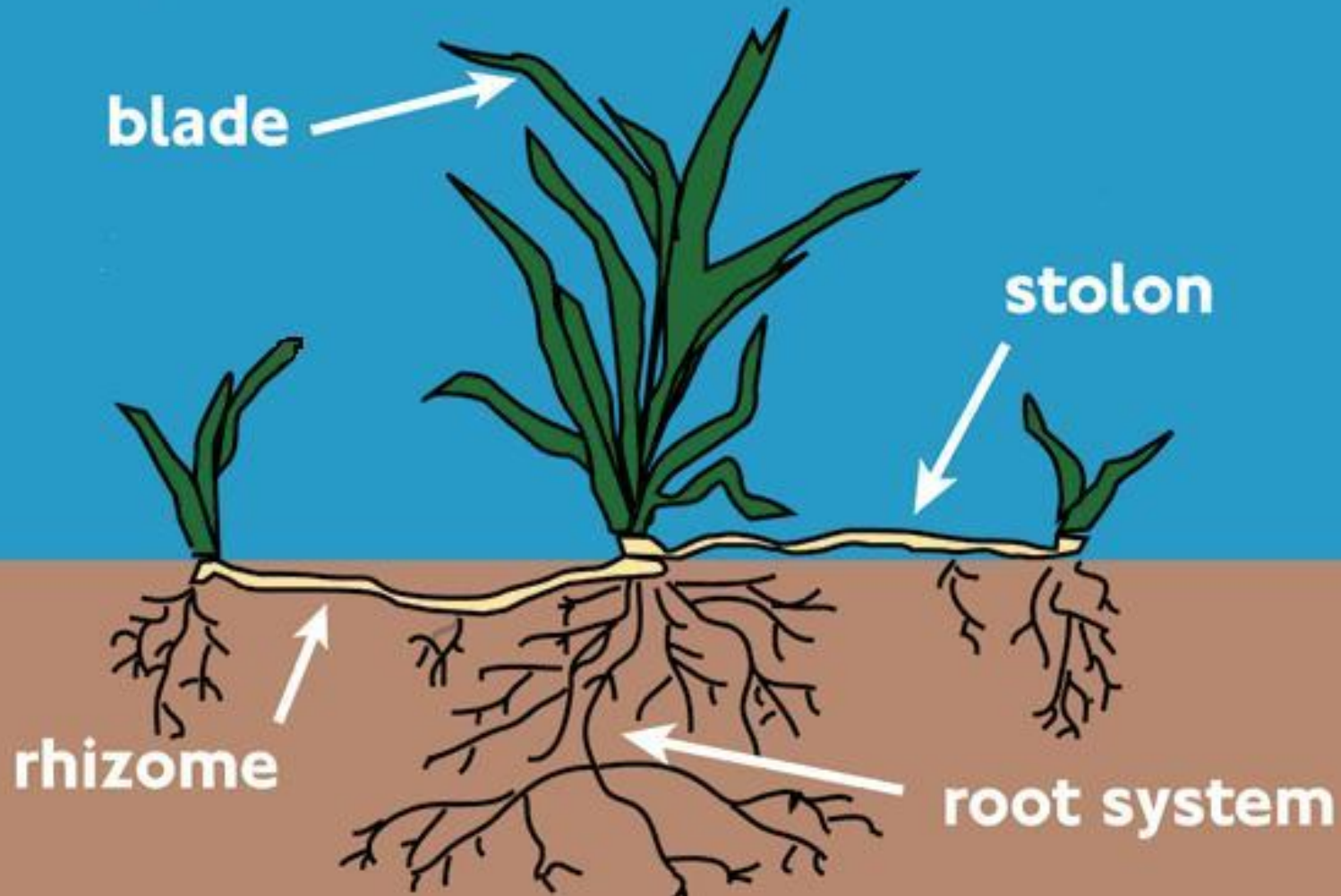
Oats



C176-12

Ripgut brome

Structure of a Grass Plant



Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*) rhizomes.



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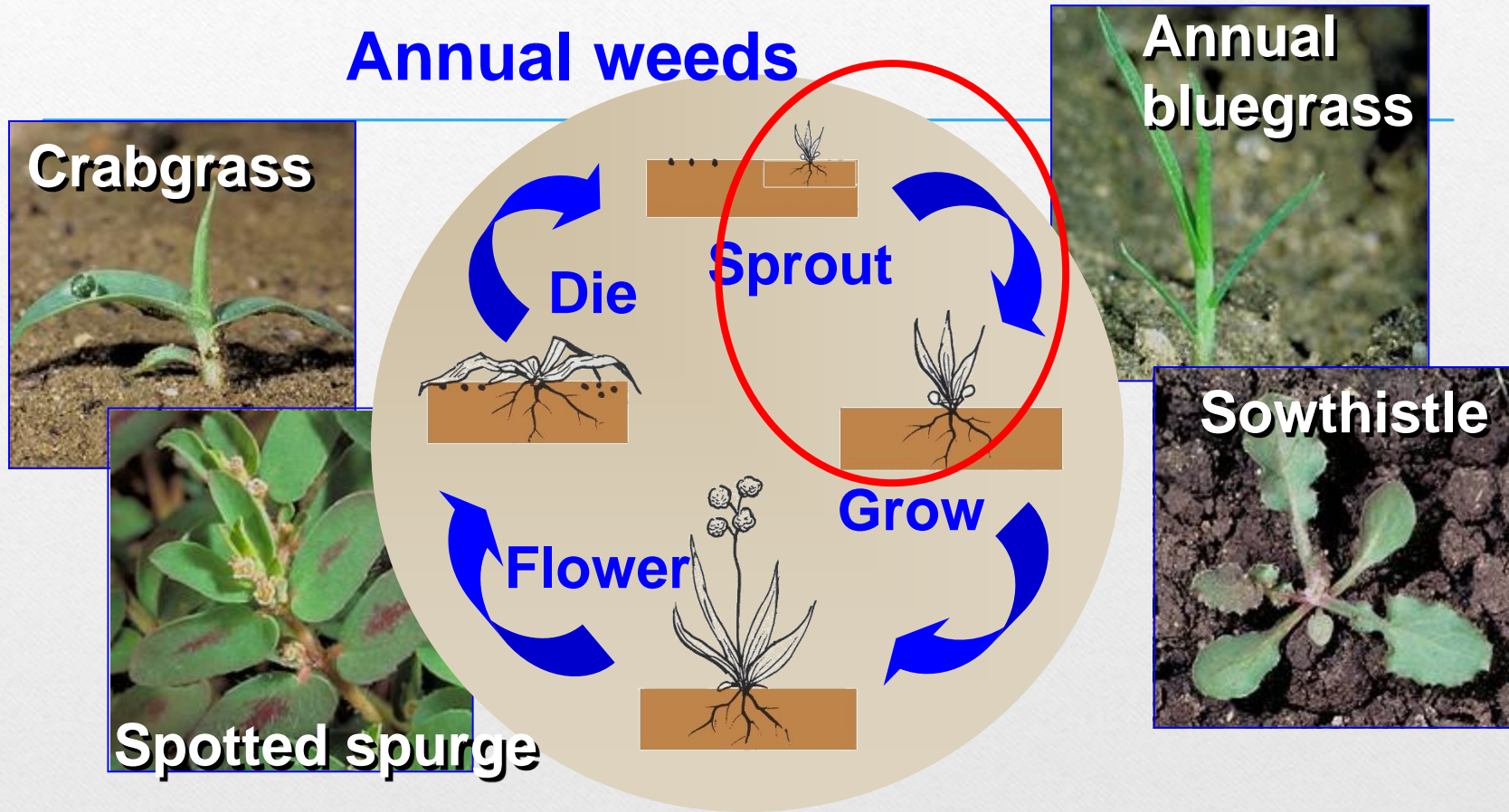
C212-09

Weed Biology

Know the life cycle of your weed

Control weeds before they spread

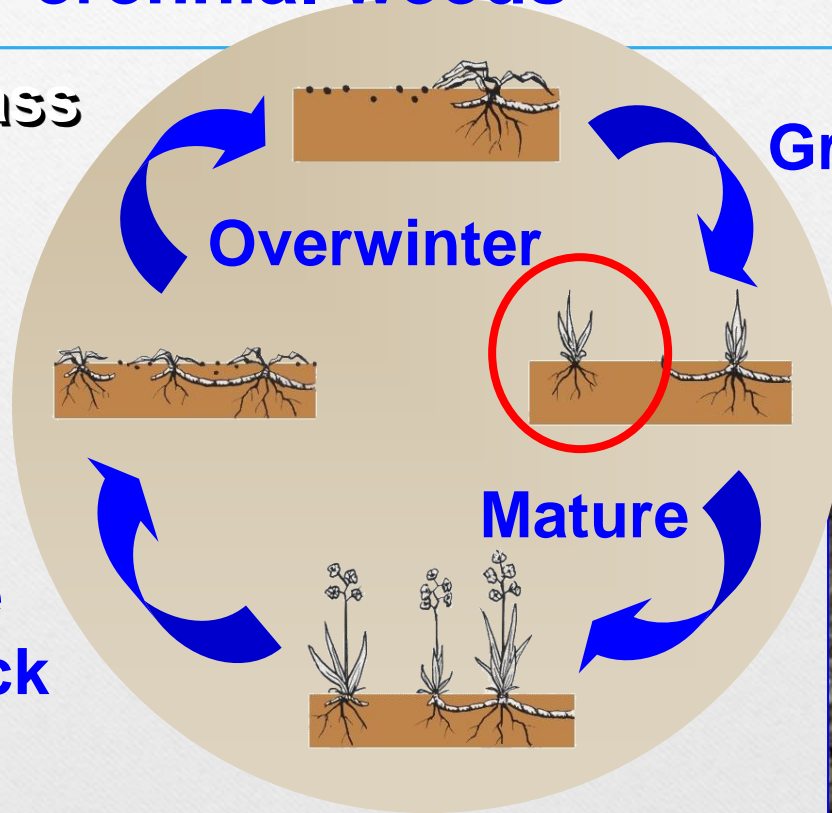
Annual weeds



Know the life cycle of your weed

Control before vegetative parts or seeds form

Perennial weeds



Simple perennial weeds

- Reproduce primarily from seed
- Generally do not reproduce from roots
- However, can reproduce from root segments if root is cut up or broken off.



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Broadleaf plantain

IPM Project
nts, University of California



Buckhorn plantain

IPM Project
nts, University of California

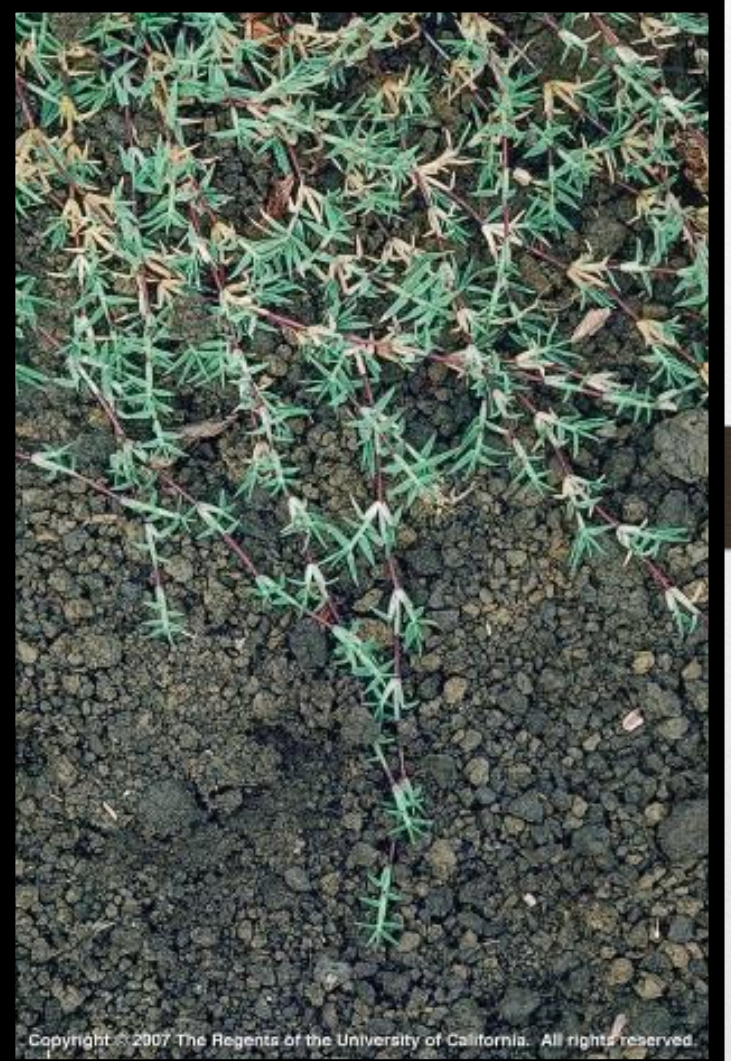
Creeping perennial weeds

- Are the worst weeds!
- Can spread by seed or by creeping roots, rhizomes, stolons or tubers.
- There are sedges, grasses and broadleaf creeping perennials.

Johnsongrass and Bermudagrass - creeping



C212-09



C185-03

Field bindweed – creeping



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Nutsedge - creeping



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C111-03



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-04



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C111-02

WEED MANAGEMENT IN LANDSCAPES

Integrated Pest Management for Landscape Professionals

Weed management in landscapes is a complex task. It is often made difficult by the complexity of many plantings, usually more than one species is planted in one landscape area and there is a mix of

the sites so problems can be complex. In future editions we hope to be able to write the characteristics to look for include drainage, soil composition, shading, and water utilization rate.

COMMON GROUND

Integrated Pest Management for Home Gardeners and Landscape Professionals

Common groundsel or old-man-of-the-spring (*Senecio jacobaea*) found nearly everywhere in California (Fig. 1). It is most prolific during the cooler times of the year, but can be found year-round near the coast or in shady areas. Although common groundsel grows best in moist fertile soil, it can grow in more trying environments such as along roadsides and other disturbed sites. It is also one of the major weeds poisoning to horses, cattle, and swine, even if only a small amount is eaten over a few weeks time.

The mature common groundsel as a weed lives in its seeds. It starts dropping seeds very early in its life cycle and can produce 25,000 or more seeds per plant under optimal conditions, although about 1,700 seeds per plant are more likely. These seeds are easily spread by wind. Additionally, there can be three or more generations per year. Even when the plant is pulled from the ground or cut down, seeds from open flowers can still mature and germinate. This weed was also one of the first to have populations develop resistance to some common agricultural herbicides.

IDENTIFICATION AND LIFE CYCLE

Common groundsel is in the Asteraceae family, which also includes sunflowers, dandelions, and thistles. It is deciduous in a winter annual since the seeds germinate in late fall through early spring. The plant matures throughout spring and early summer and usually dies in the summer heat. The first true leaves of seedlings have shallow lobes, may be purple on the



Figure 1. Common groundsel or old-man-of-the-spring showing a single flower stalk and seeds, and are attached to the stem with a short petiole. Later developing leaves are more deeply lobed and are attached directly to the stem. Leaves alternate on the stem and are mostly hairless. In full sun, groundsel grows up to 3 feet tall with a shallow taproot and a secondary fibrous root system and a often branched. Under shaded conditions the mature plant will have

PEST NOTES

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Publication 74130

May 2006

ANNUAL BLUEGRASS

Integrated Pest Management for Home Gardeners and Landscape Professionals

Annual bluegrass, *Poa annua* (Fig. 2) is one of the most common weeds of turf, recreational plantings, and gardens in the United States. It is native to Europe but is distributed worldwide. Commonly referred to as "Turf," it is especially a problem in golf course greens and fairways throughout the world. It also can be a weed in vegetable crops and agronomic crops. Though present in turf and other uses in California, it is usually not a significant problem. The green *Poa* consists of about 200 species worldwide. Their typical "boat-shaped" leaf type (Fig. 2), which curve up like the bow of a boat, are a distinguishing characteristic of the genus.

Three members of the green *Poa* are commonly found in turf. Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) is a variation, cool-season turf species that is well adapted to cool, well-watered sites such as coastal and temperate areas. Rough bluegrass (*Poa trivittata*) is a less desirable turf species that does well in moist, shaded areas, but lacks root and drought tolerance. Annual bluegrass is a weed species that, unlike Kentucky and rough bluegrass, is able to survive low mowing heights (less than 1 inch) and still persist. A fourth species, bulbous bluegrass (*Poa bulbosa*) is occasionally found as a weed in sports or California lawns.

IDENTIFICATION AND LIFE CYCLE

Annual bluegrass is a winter annual because there are two plant types of annual bluegrass: a true annual (*P. annua*) and a perennial type (*P. annua* var. *capitata*). While the two types are not easy to distinguish from each other, the annual type is more upright in its growth habit and produces more seed than the leaves growing perennial

type. The annual type also tends to produce a higher percentage of dormant seed. The perennial type produces seed that germinates readily under optimum conditions. Depending on the site there may be a predominance of one type or a mixture of both. The germination type is common to each also as golf course greens, while the annual type may be more common in lawns and parks (though both types can be found in either of these situations).

Annual bluegrass starts germinating in late summer or fall as soil temperatures fall below 50°F. It continues to germinate throughout winter, allowing several flushes of germination at any one site throughout winter. Annual bluegrass grows to a height of 8 to 8 inches when left unmowed. It has light green, flattened stems that are level at the base and often rooted at the lower nodes. Jointed leaf blades are often crinkled part way down and may have 1 to 3 inches in length with typical flat, boat-shaped leaf tips. The inflorescence (flowering structure) is a terminal panicle that varies from 1 to 4 inches in length. Seed heads (inflorescence) can start as early as plants are 6 weeks old in early fall and continue until early summer, but most seed heads are formed in spring.

The annual form of annual bluegrass is a rapid and prolific seeder. Each small plant can produce about 100 seeds in as few as 6 weeks. Mature seed can be produced just a few days after pollination, which allows the plant to spread over its



Figure 2. Annual bluegrass leaf tip.



Figure 3. Annual bluegrass.

frequently mowed turf. The seed is another color and shape (boat-shaped).

Annual bluegrass has a fairly weak and shallow root system and needs moderate moisture from rainfall or frequent irrigation to survive. It grows well in moist areas in full sun. However, it can also do well in semi-shaded conditions. Annual bluegrass also can grow in compacted soil conditions. In coastal regions or in moderate temperatures areas where turf is frequently irrigated, annual bluegrass may persist all year. In warmer areas, it usually dies in summer.

IMPACT

Annual bluegrass can be a major weed problem for turf and landscape managers. In turf it forms a weak mat that provides poor footing for athletic fields and golf courses. In addition, unwanted seed heads of annual bluegrass reduce the aesthetic quality of the turf. Because of its winter growth habit, it is more competitive than warm-season turf grasses (common bermudagrass, sty-

DANDELIONS

Integrated Pest Management for Home Gardeners and Landscape Professionals



IDENTIFICATION AND LIFE CYCLE

Dandelion is a perennial that grows best in moist areas in full sun. Leaves cover 8 inch or more across shade and



CREeping WOODSORREL AND BERMUDA BUTTERCUP

Integrated Pest Management for Home Gardeners and Landscape Professionals

Creeping woodsorrel, *Oxalis corniculata*, is a characteristic weed species that occurs throughout the world. It is most commonly found in habitats growing below the 2,000 foot elevation level. It is widely distributed in lawns, flower beds, nurseries, gardens, and greenhouses. A related species, Bermuda buttercup (*O. pes-caprae*), from South Africa and is found in natural gardens and fields and related habitats. Bermuda buttercup has been cultivated as an ornamental, but though it is sometimes found in lawns, it usually is only a problem in seedbed or shrub areas.

IDENTIFICATION AND LIFE CYCLE

Creeping Woodsorrel. Creeping woodsorrel grows in both full sun and full shade areas that receive adequate moisture. It is a perennial plant (lives in several seasons) that grows in a rosette manner (low and creeping) and forms roots along its stems where they contact the soil (Fig. 1). The stems of creeping woodsorrel are composed of three heart-shaped leaflets but are attached to the tip of a long, thin petiole. Leaves can range in color from green to purple. The leaves then die and sleep at night or under snowy light. If creeping woodsorrel stems are stressed from drought or full sunlight, the leaves sometimes turn reddish and wilt.

Leaves of creeping woodsorrel can be used almost anytime during the year and have the small yellow petals 1/8 to

1/2 inch long) that occur in clusters of one to five at the ends of slender flower stalks. Seed pods are erect, hairy, cylindrical (resembling clubs), and 1/2 to 1 inch long. Creeping woodsorrel seed is single, reddish, and about 1/8 inch in length. There are about 10 to 50 seeds per pod, with more than 5,000 seeds per plant. Plants can produce seed even when kept mowed to 1/2 inch. When seed pods mature, they burst open and forcefully expel the seeds, which may land 10 feet or more from the plant. Because seeds are rough, they adhere to surfaces of machinery or clothing.

Light is required for germination. Optimum seed germination occurs at temperatures between 65° to 80°F, though some germination occurs at lower temperatures. Seed can germinate anytime of year, but most plant establishment takes place in fall. It is not known how long seed remains viable in the soil. Germination is inhibited when seeds are exposed to moist, warm conditions (4 hours of moist heat at 75°F decreased germination of creeping woodsorrel by 90%, and 8 hours stopped it altogether).

The seedling has two small cotyledons (seed leaves), and the first true leaves are a replica of the mature, three heart-shaped leaflets. Creeping woodsorrel grows rapidly from a seedling, forming a fleshy taproot and an extensive rootstock that expands outward. Though flowering seems to occur almost all year, spring is a time of heavy flower-



Figure 1. Creeping woodsorrel.

ing and seed formation. Extremely cold or hot temperatures reduce growth, but the plants do not die if the plant is pulled out, the rootstock often breaks off and remains in the soil, allowing the plant to regrow.

Bermuda Buttercup. Bermuda buttercup is a perennial that grows in full sun in cool coastal areas, but tolerates it grows generally in shaded areas. It grows from bulbs in fall and flowers in late winter or early spring. The plant forms a single, short, vertical stem that is mostly underground. The leaves, which are larger and more fleshy than those of creeping woodsorrel and are often spotted with purple, form a rosette on the soil surface. Small, whitish bulbous develop on the stem at the base of the rosette of leaves, and new bulbs form underground. The flowers are bright yellow and from 1/2 inch to 1 1/2 inches in diameter, and the seed pods resemble five bulbs. Bermuda

PEST NOTES

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Publication 7464

Revised April 2003

PEST NOTES

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Publication 7444

Revised January 2002

PestNotes are a great resource for biology

Some Troublesome Lawn and Garden Weeds

Annual Bluegrass

- **Cool-season Annual, Biennial, or Perennial**
- **One of the most abundant weeds**
- **Annuals die and perennial types go dormant under hot dry conditions.**
- **Seeds have been reported to survive 30 years under field conditions and some can survive ingestion by cattle!**



C206-01



C206-06

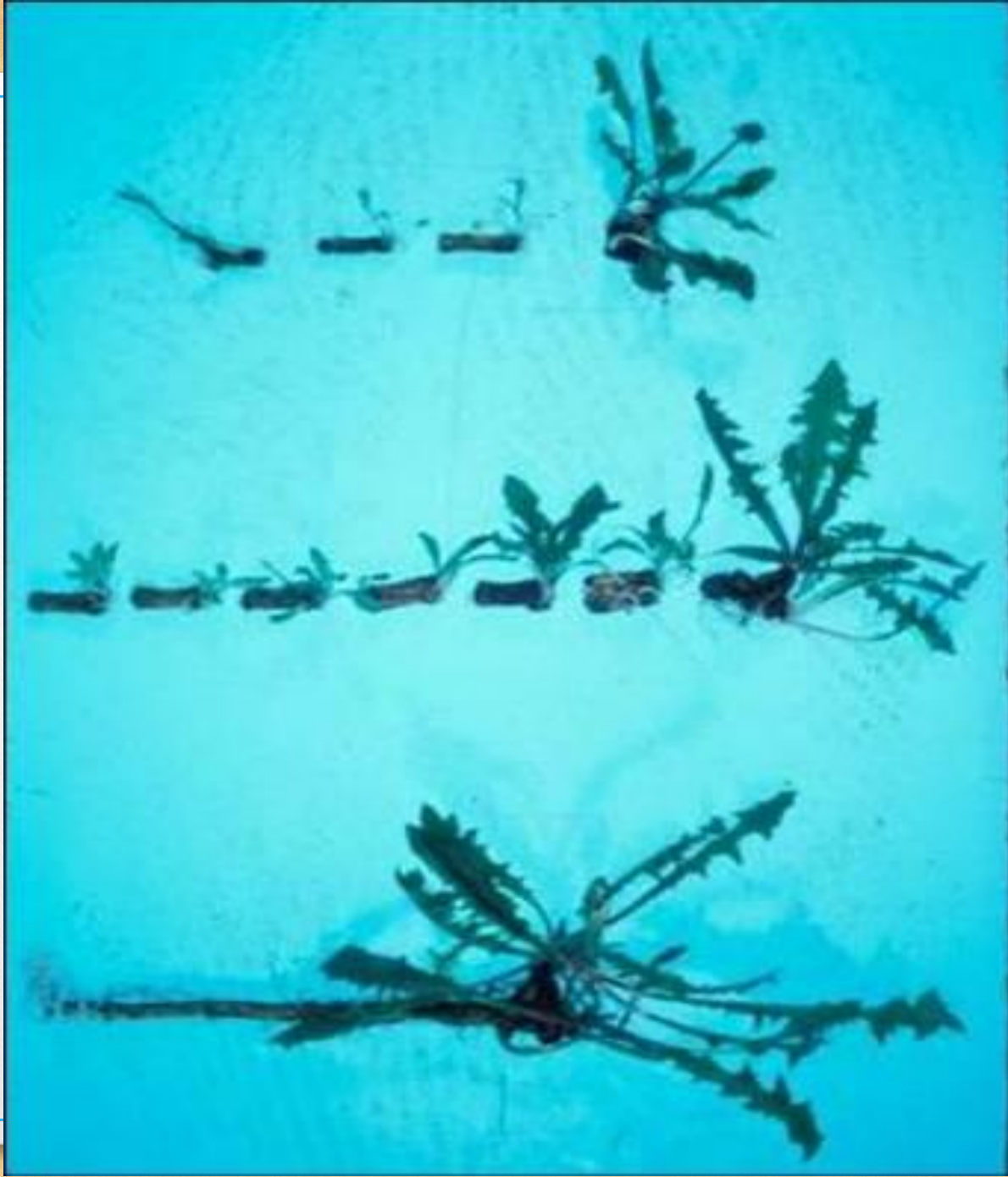


C206-02

Dandelion

- Perennial-in this area will grow almost year round
- Each Plant can produce thousands of seeds-
- Seeds can germinate all year around
- Control plants when small-roots can resprout
if not completely removed



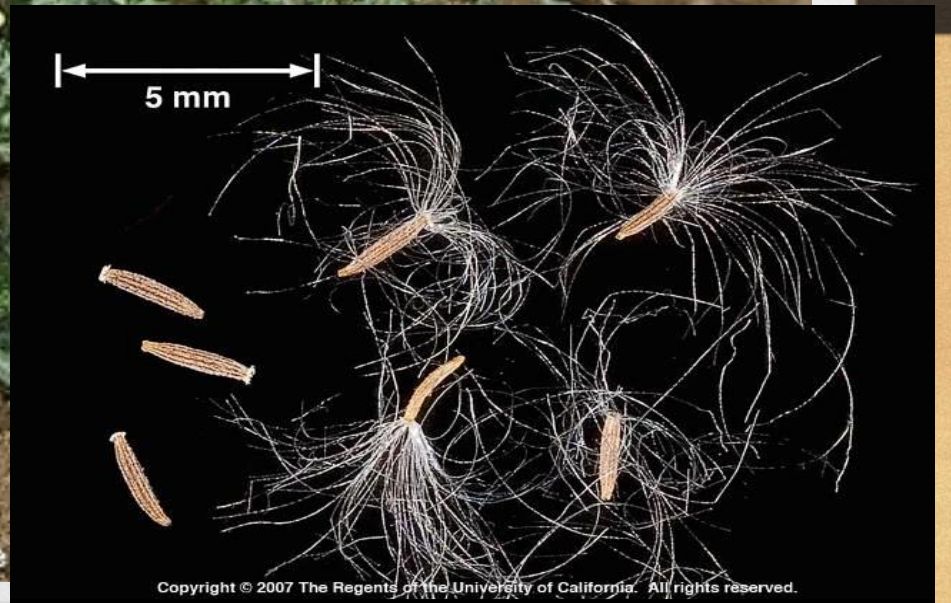


Common Groundsel

- Winter annual-germinates early in fall and begins to produce seeds in mid winter
- Can produce up to 25,000 seeds per plant!
- Seeds usually only last one year
- Can be easily controlled with mulch or if pulled before seed production



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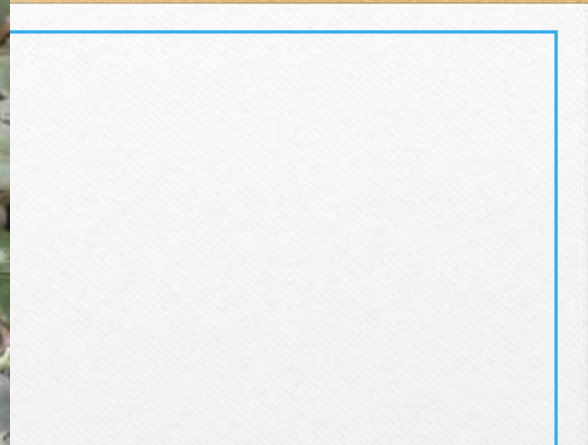
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Oxalis

- **Two species of Oxalis- both perennial**
- **One spreads by seed- Creeping Woodsorrel**
- **One spreads by bulbs- Bermuda Buttercup**

Creeping Woodsorrel

- Perennial- in colder area acts like an annual
- Spreads by seed-up to 5000 per plant that can be expelled up to eight feet from parent plant!
- Light is required for germination
- Whole plant must be pulled- severed stems can develop into new plants
- Control before seeds are produced- seedlings flower in as little as 4 weeks- nearly year round



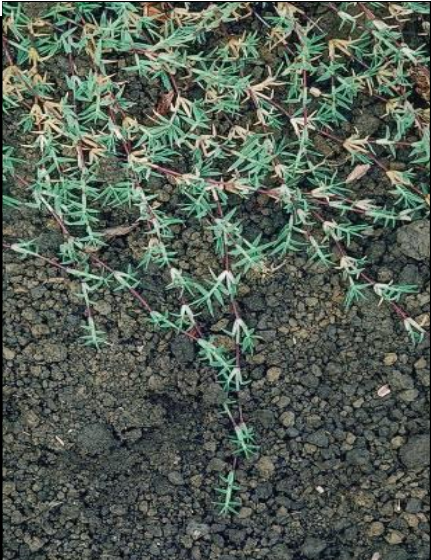
Bermuda Buttercup

- Bulbs germinate in fall after first rain. Foliage dies and bulbs become dormant as temperatures rise in late spring and summer
- Plants in California very rarely produce seeds
- Forms a single, short underground vertical stem
- Small, whitish bulblets develop on the stems at the base of the rosette of leaves and new bulbs form underground.
- Repeated cultivation before bulbs are developed may reduce infestation



Bermudagrass

- **Perennial Grass-**
 - **Spreads by Stolon, Rhizome and Seeds!**
- **Growth is reduced by shade**
- **Will go dormant in winter**
- **Must use geotextile mat under mulch**
- **Can be controlled by drying out in summer... not easily-**



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Creeping and Spotted Spurge

- Seedlings germinate when temperature warms in the spring and can produce seeds within 2 weeks!
- Light burial can dramatically reduce germination
- Creeping spurge can spread by rooting at nodes
- Ants have been known to spread seeds
- Major method of control- prevent invasion

Creeping Spurge

Spotted Spurge

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Yellow Nutsedge

- Does not move by seed
- Nutlets- tubers will form after 2-3 weeks
- Infestation is by soil movement
- Repeated pulling- every 2-3 weeks will eventually reduce population
- Often confused with Tall flatsedge- grows in wet areas- does not produce nutlets



C111-03

Tall flatsedge- similar to Yellow Nutsedge



Perennial- but does not form nutlets

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Other weeds

Panicle willowherb

Epilobium brachycarpum C. Presl



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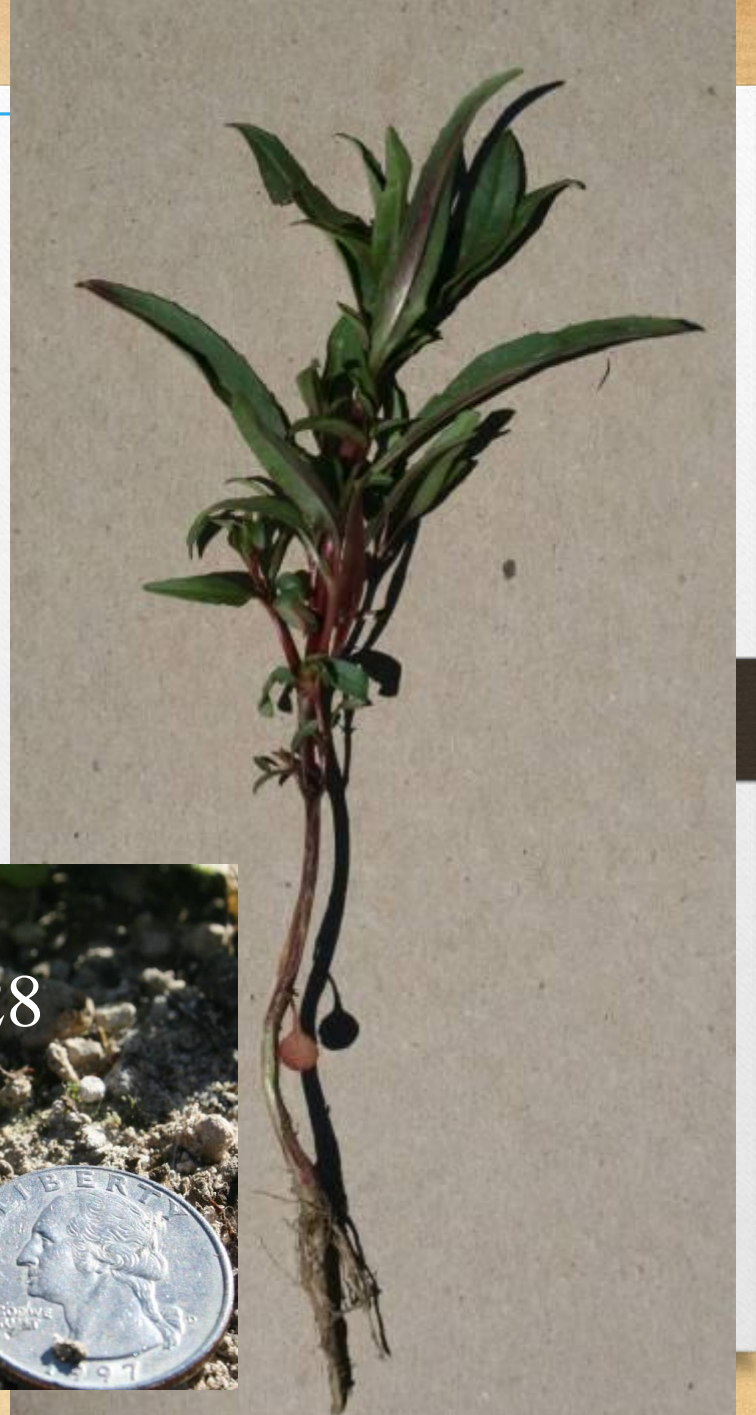




February 28



November 28





Roundup on willowherb



Horseweed (*Conyza canadensis*)

- AKA mare's tail
- Annual weed
- Prolific seed producer
- Wind-blown seed
- Early colonizer
- Doesn't tolerate disturbance
- 6-fold resistance (whole plant)
- 4-8 fold resistance (in vivo)
- Suspected translocation mutation







Ryegrass

- Species *Lolium perenne* L. – perennial ryegrass
 - Subspecies - multiflorum (Lam.) Husnot – Italian ryegrass
 - Subspecies - perenne – perennial ryegrass
- Species *Lolium rigidum* Gaudin – Wimmera ryegrass





Stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*)

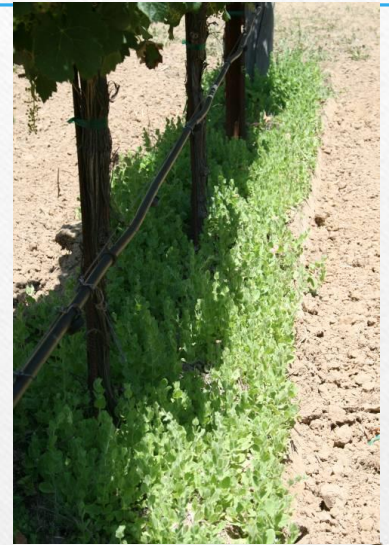
- Native to Mediterranean region
- Erect, fall flowering, aromatic annual about 2 feet tall.
- First reported in Alameda County in 1995
- Unpalatable to livestock
- Resembles Russian thistle, but is more similar to tarweed
- Causes dermatitis
- Germinate February-? Flowers in November





Sharp-point Fluvellin (*Kickxia elatine*(L.)Dumort)

- Reproduces by seeds
- Most seeds germinate in spring or summer
- Will germinate thru fall if moisture is present.
- Seeds can last up to 20 years!



Sharp-point Fluvellin

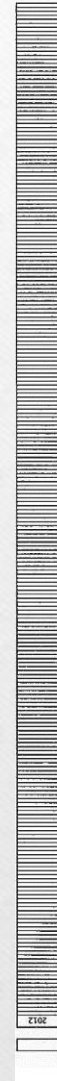
There is a milk carton under this plant!

Fluvellin competing with newly planted grapes

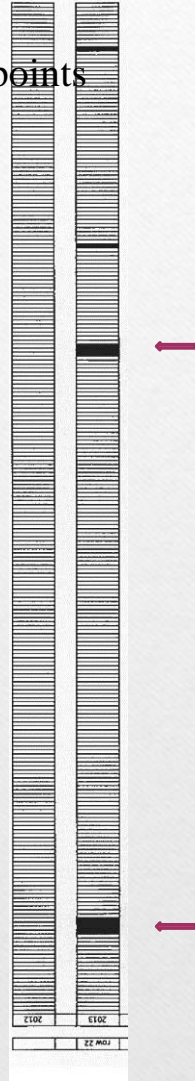
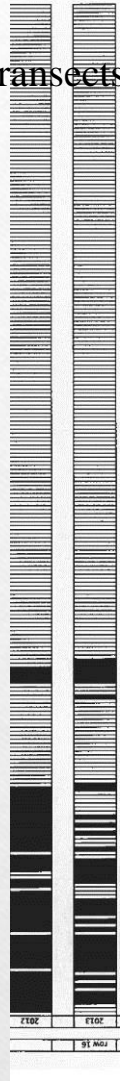
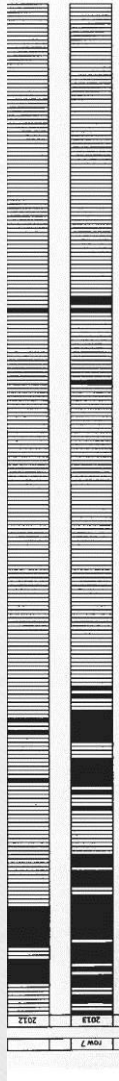
Fall 'variation' of fluvellin



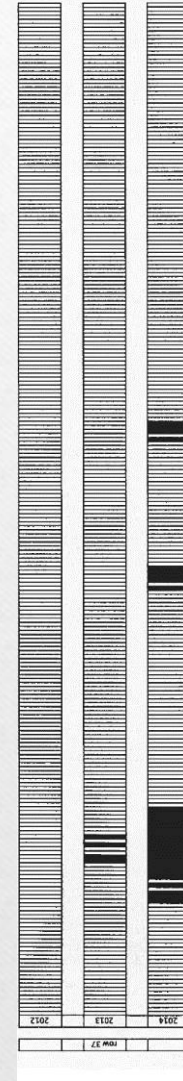
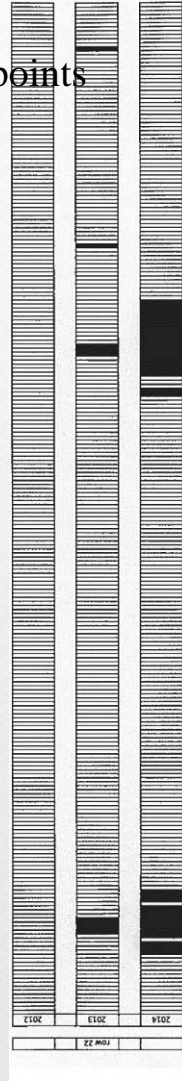
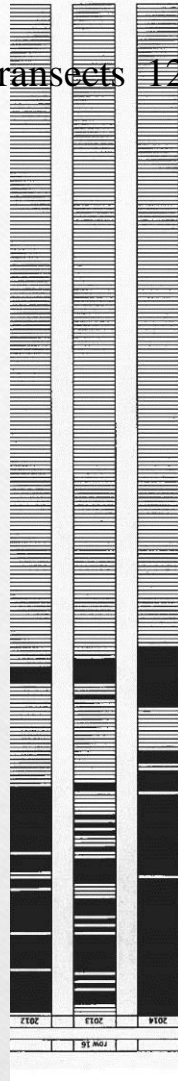
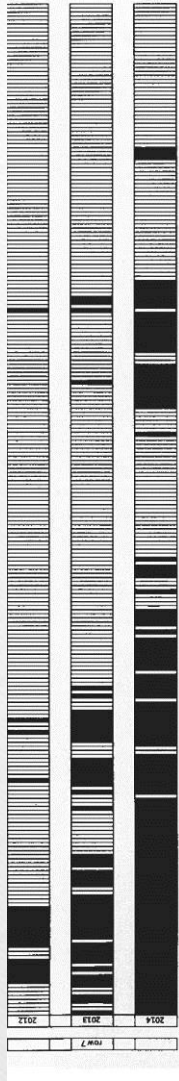
Transects 126 ft. long/ 252 points



Transects 126 ft. long/ 252 points



Transects 126 ft. long/ 252 points



Sharp-point Fluvellin



Questions?