

Weeds in Florida: Introduction¹

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Weed growth of both native and exotic vegetation can severely decrease the commercial, recreational and aesthetic value of crops, landscapes and waterways. In certain situations some degree of weed growth may be desirable. Control measures are needed only when an overabundance of weed growth begins to affect economic use. Our environment is a complex and dynamic system that is subject to a myriad of pressures. This is particularly true of Florida which has undergone tremendous demographic growth in the last decade. With the continuously increasing demand for Florida's resources, it is essential that they be managed in the most prudent fashion. Because of Florida's geographical setting and meteorological conditions, much of the state supports an extensive growth of weeds, many of which are not found in other parts of the United States.

This publication is designed as an aid to the identification of weeds found in Florida. Modern methods of weed management require that a correct name be applied to the weed so that appropriate control measures can be taken. Biology and history are included as an aid in adapting control measures and research involving these species. The use of

integrated programs may be more efficient than the use of any single weed control method. While this publication is specifically directed toward the professional, it can be used by everyone. Identification of the plants is aided by the color photographs which are placed with the text.

Eventually all of the more than 600 weeds in Florida will be documented in this way. As changes occur in names or in biology of the weeds already published, the text can be updated rapidly in this loose-leaf format. This format also lends itself to prompt publication of information on weeds that are newly arrived or for other reasons are rapidly expanding in Florida.

The scientific name used is that found in the "Composite List of Weeds" published in *Weed Science*, Volume 32, Supplement 2, pages 1-137, 1984. Some names have not yet been included in this listing. The Florida common name for the plant is always listed first followed by the common name (if different) found in the above volume of *Weed Science*. The scientific and common names for the family are included in addition to any alternate scientific name for the family (in parentheses).

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