

Heartwing Sorrel, *Rumex hastatulus* Baldwin ex Ell.¹

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Classification

Common Name: Heartwing Sorrel

Scientific Name: *Rumex hastatulus* Baldwin ex Ell.

Family: Polygonaceae, Buckwheat Family

Seedling

The cotyledon blades are thickened and about 0.5 cm long (Figure 1). The veins are not apparent. The petioles are flat on the upper surface. The first true leaves are alternate.



Figure 1. Seedling, Heartwing Sorrel, *Rumex hastatulus* Baldwin ex Ell.

Mature Plant

Heartwing Sorrel is a winter annual or rarely a short-lived perennial (Figure 2). The leaves have the shape of an arrowhead. The male and female flowers are on separate plants and are pink to purple-red. The female flowers have outer sepals 0.5-1.0 mm long. The fruit (achene) is 3-4 mm long and has smooth papery wings.



Figure 2. Mature plant, Heartwing Sorrel, *Rumex hastatulus* Baldwin ex Ell.

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History

The genus name *Rumex* is the Latin name which was used for this plant. The Latin species name *hastatulus* means spear-shaped and refers to the shape of the leaves.

Habitat

This weed is common on sandy soil throughout the coastal plain of the southeastern United States. It occurs in Florida from the central part of the state northward into the southeastern United States to Texas, and northward through the Midwest to Montana and Illinois and through the Northeast to Massachusetts.

Biology

The seeds are a common wild bird food. Oxalates in this plant can be poisonous by binding calcium in the blood. The sap can cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.