July 2022 Pest Management Newsletter

What's the Weed?

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This month's Weed Science contest is **What's the Weed?**

This weed species is a climbing/trailing vine that can be found in fields, roadsides, and along railroads. It is a perennial that is a member of the Morningglory family, and it can grow up to 3.5 feet long. In the state of Arkansas, this weed species is one of the 25 listed noxious weeds.

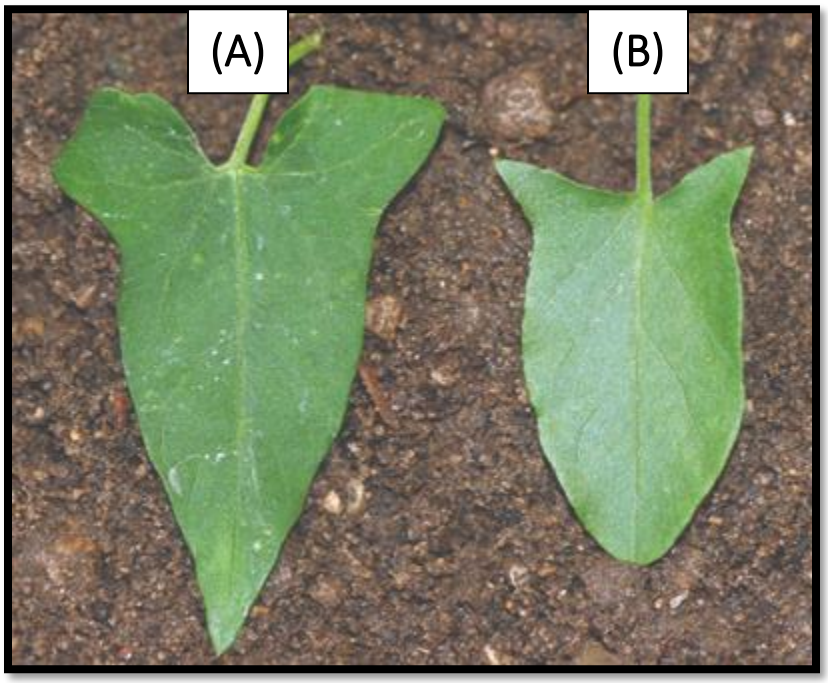
As a seedling, this weed has uniquely shaped cotyledons that are wide, and almost square-shaped with a small indent at the end (Picture 1). The vines form dense mats and can be either smooth or hairy. The leaves are alternate and can range from triangular to oblong, with hairs and without. Additionally, there are other species that can look extremely similar, but can be differentiated by the number of "points" on the leaf. The weed species as a part of this contest has 3 points (Picture 2b), while a different, but similar species has 5 points (Picture 2a). The flowers are primarily white but can be tinged with pink (Picture 3). Although rare, if ingested, this plant has been known to contain toxins that can cause diarrhea, vomiting, colic, depression, weakness, and drowsiness.

To successfully manage this weed species, a diverse set of management strategies across multiple years are required. In commercial horticulture or landscaping, landscape fabrics paired with mulch have been effective at stopping germination of field bindweed, but it would likely take more than 3 years of constant light exclusion before bindweed becomes nonviable. Cultivation can aid in control, but only if it occurs within 3 to 4 weeks after germination (before perennial buds form) and is repeated every 3 weeks. Otherwise, cultivation of an established stand of this weed species will only spread the perennial parts and worsen the infestation. Chemical control is often required to truly manage this perennial weed. Preemergence herbicides such as pendimethalin or trifluralin have been effective at controlling germinating seedlings and reducing (not completely controlling though) perennial shoots. Postemergence options include systemic herbicides like glyphosate (in combination with other herbicides), 2,4-D, dicamba, and quinclorac, as the herbicide must move through the vine and into the perennial roots to officially kill the weed long-term.

To win a prize, be the first to email me at tbutts@uada.edu with the correct common name of this weed species. BONUS: If you can name the second weed species in Picture 2(a), you can win 2 prizes (but you have to get the first one correct)!



Picture 1. (Picture taken in Lonoke Greenhouse)



Picture 2. (Courtesy of Michigan State University)



Picture 3. (Courtesy of Nebraska Invasive Species Program)