



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Cobbler's pegs (467)

Relates to: **Weeds**



Photo 1. Cobbler's pegs, *Bidens pilosa*, erect herb, with compound leaves and yellow flowers.



Photo 2. Cobbler's pegs, *Bidens pilosa*, flowers. Note, not all plants have the white ray florets.



Photo 3. Seeds of cobbler's pegs, *Bidens pilosa*, showing the two stiff barbed bristles at the end of the 'seeds' - the latter are fruits with seeds inside. Note these flowers are without the white ray florets (see Photo 2).



Photo 4. Fruits (the seeds are inside), cobbler's pegs, *Bidens pilosa*, attached to shoelaces!

Summary

- Widespread. Asia, Africa, North, South and Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. In most Pacific islands.
- Annual weed of crops, plantations, forests, pastures, waterways, gardens, parks, roadsides, waste lands, coastal and other disturbed sites. Produces large amounts viable, long-lasting, easily-dispersed seed, grows in range of habitats, developing dense populations, out-competing crop plants and native species. Alternative host for viruses (*Tomato spotted wilt virus*), nematodes (*Meloidogyne*, *Rotylenchus* and leaf miners (*Liriomyza*).
- Slender, erect, branching, up to 90 cm tall. Stems, square, hairless, green to purple. Leaves, opposite along stems, toothed margins, single at base, compound above (three leaflets). Flowerheads in clusters at end of branches, 7-8 mm across, yellow flowers in centre. Some with surrounding white petals-like structures. Fruits black, flattened with hooked bristles. Strong tap root.
- Spread: seed; clothing; water; contaminant of rice seed; vehicles.
- Biosecurity: high risk of introduction; contaminant of seed, clothing. One of the worst weeds in New Caledonia and Guam. On Global Invasive Species Database of alien invasive species (IUCN, 2020).
- Biocontrol: little known.
- Cultural control: hand weed, hoe or cultivate mechanically between rows; shade by intercropping; vehicle hygiene.
- Chemical control: in Australia: diuron; glyphosate (and Fiji); bentazone; metribuzin; 2,4-D; glufosinate-ammonium; pendimethalin;

dicamba; fluroxypyr.

Common Name

Cobbler's pegs; it is also known as beggar's ticks, or pitchforks. The name beggar's ticks is usually given to a related species, *Bidens alba*.

Scientific Name

Bidens pilosa. There are other closely related species, *Bidens alba* and *Bidens odorata*. Identification is complicated because of the similarity of other species; it should be done by specialists. These species are members of the Asteraceae.

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Adapted from Cobbler's pegs (*Bidens pilosa*) (2018) Weeds of SE Qld and Northern NSW, Lucidcentral, (<https://www.lucidcentral.org/editors-pick-animal-and-plant-identification-keys/key-to-weeds-of-se-qld-and-northern-nsw/>); and additional information from CABI (2019) *Bidens pilosa* (bitter vine). Invasive Species Compendium, (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/9148>); and Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press, Melbourne; *Bidens pilosa* (2010) Wikipedia, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bidens_pilosa). Photos 1&3 Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org. Photo 2 William M. Ciesla, Forest Health Management International, Bugwood.org. Photo 4 Forest & Kim Starr, Forrest Environmental, bugwood.org.

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