

## Commelina (460)

### Summary

- Widespread. Asia, Africa, North, South and Central America, Oceania. In Australia, Fiji, PNG.
- Invasive, long-lived, much-branching, creeping weed of plantations, orchards, vegetable fields, wet pastures, field borders, roadsides, gardens and wasteland. Mainly problem in open, moist habitats with disturbed soils, and young crops. Withstands temporary flooding.
- Soft, smooth, fleshy stems, up to 100 cm long, enclosed by sheath at base. Leaves, 4-6 cm long, alternate along stems, with hairs on margins. Flowers, small clusters in upper leaf forks, three bright blue petals, opening in morning. Seeds, dark-brown. Roots from nodes along stems.
- Spread: vegetative propagation; seeds; stem pieces; water; soil; as a medicinal plant and ornamental.
- Biosecurity: moderately high risk of introduction; used as an ornamental. Available on internet.
- Biocontrol: Little known.
- Cultural control: hand weed or hoe (but stem pieces regrow); cultivation (mechanical or animal drawn); cover crops; increase crop density.
- Chemical control: in Australia: bentazone; glyphosate; fluroxypyr; pendimethalin. In Fiji, metsulfuron-methyl.

### Common Name

Commelina; it is also known as wandering Jew, baby dayflower, or scurvy weed. CABI prefers the name spreading dayflower.

### Scientific Name

*Commelina diffusa*. It has also been known as *Commelina nidiflora* and *Commelina communis*. It is similar to another plant also called wandering Jew, *Commelina benghalensis*. It is a member of the Commelinaceae.

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Adapted from Wandering Jew (*Commelina diffusa*) (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) *Commelina diffusa* (wandering Jew). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/14979>); and from *Commelina diffusa* (2019) Wikipedia. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commelina\\_diffusa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commelina_diffusa)). Photo 1 Bruce Ackley, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org; Photo 3 Forest and Kim Starr, Starr Environmental, Bugwood.org.

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Photo 1. Leaves and stems, commelina, *Commelina diffusa*.



Photo 2. Leaves and flowers, commelina, *Commelina diffusa*.



Photo 3. Flower showing three petals, stamens and sigma, commelina, *Commelina diffusa*.

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