

Pigweed (462)

Summary

- Widespread. Asia, Africa, North, South and Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. In Australia, FSM, Fiji, New Zealand, PNG.
- Aggressive weed of vegetables, grain and plantation crops, pastures, disturbed sites, waste areas, footpaths and roadsides. Invasiveness assisted by rapid growth in variety of soils, early flowering, huge seed production, survival in soil for several years, germinating rapidly following ploughing in responses to light. Also, drought tolerant. Alternative host of nematode, virus and phytoplasma pathogens.
- Much-branched, creeping, fleshy stem, 20-50 cm long, reddish, hairless. Leaves, alternate along stems, 5-25 mm long, hairless, wedge-shaped, without stalks (or very short). Flowers, yellow, single or in small clusters, in forks of leaves, each with 4-6 petals. Fruits contain small black seeds, glossy, warty.
- Spread: seed; by birds; wind, water; contaminant of crop seeds.
- Biosecurity: moderately high risk of introduction; contaminant of seed.
- Biocontrol: weevil, *Hypurus bertrandi*, introduced into Hawaii, but present status unreported.
- Cultural control: hand weed or hoe; thick mulch.
- Chemical control: in Australia: 2,4-D; diuron; dicamba; MCPA; metsulfuron-methyl; metribuzin; pendimethalin; propyzamide; fluroxpyr; trifluralin; glyphosate (and Fiji); oxyfluorfen.



Photo 1. Creeping single plant, pigweed, *Portulaca oleracea*.



Photo 2. Leaves, pigweed, *Portulaca oleracea*.



Photo 3. Flower, pigweed, *Portulaca oleracea*.

Common Name

Pigweed; it is also known as pig weed, or purslane.

Scientific Name

Portulaca oleracea. It was known previously as *Portulaca officinarum*. It is a member of the Portulacaceae.

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Adapted from Pigweed (*Portulaca oleracea*) (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) *Portulaca oleracea* (purslane). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/43609>); and from Waterhouse DF (1993) *Portulaca oleracea* Linnaeus. Biological Control: Pacific Prospects - Supplement 2. ACIAR Monograph No. 20. Canberra, ACT. Photo 1 Phil Westra, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org. Photo 2 ZooFari *Portulaca oleracea* (Wikipedia). Photo 3 jaçilluch Flower of *Portulaca oleracea* (Wikipedia).

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