

# *Pseudelephantopus spicatus* (Juss. ex Aubl.) C.F. Baker

**Family:**

**Asteraceae**

Baker, C.F. (1902) *Transactions of the Academy of Science of St. Louis* 12(5): 55.

**Common name:**

Elephant Weed

**Stem**

Usually flowers and fruits as a herb but occasionally flowers as a shrub.

**Leaves**

Leaf blades variable in size, up to 18 x 5 cm. Hairs present on both the upper and lower surfaces of the leaf blade but more numerous near the margin. Glands visible on the underside of the leaf blade.

**Flowers**

Flowers borne in narrow bullet-shaped heads, four flowers per head. Two of the pappus bristles of each flower are much longer than the others and are sigmoid near the apex (something like an ornate shepherd's crook). Corolla white, about 7 mm long. Anthers fused to one another. Pollen white.

**Fruit**

The pappus on the end of each fruit consists of two longer and thicker bristles which have been twisted and contorted to form sigmoid heads and a number of shorter, thinner bristles. Fruit about 5-6 mm long.

**Seedlings**

Hypocotyl glabrous, stem above the cotyledons clothed in erect, white hairs. Cotyledons obovate, about 8-9 x 3-4 mm, apex glandular. First pair of leaves with toothed margins. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves obovate or narrowly obovate, sessile +/- clasping the stem. Both the upper and lower surfaces sparsely clothed in pale prostrate hairs. Lower surface of the leaf blade minutely glandular. Seed germination time 10 to 21 days.

**Distribution and Ecology**

An introduced species originally from tropical America, now naturalised in CYP and NEQ. Recorded from NT but not considered naturalised. Altitudinal range in NEQ from near sea level to 200 m. Grows in clearings and along roads in lowland rain forest.

**Synonyms**

***Elephantopus spicatus* B. Juss. ex Aubl.**, *Histoire des plantes de la Guiane Française* 2: 808(1775), Type: West Indies.

**RFK Code**

**3461**



Flower head. © Barry Jago



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



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