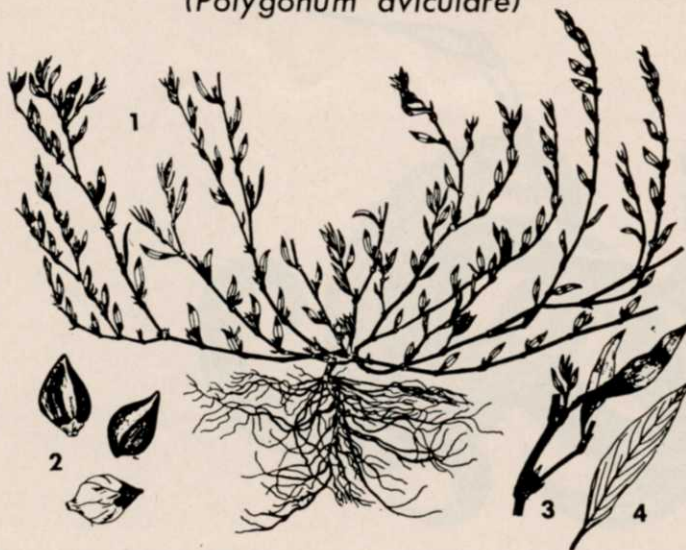


Prostrate Knotweed
(*Polygonum aviculare*)



Prostrate knotweed¹ is a seed-producing summer annual which grows in yards, along sidewalks, waste places, roadways, paths, and any place that soil may be so compacted that other plants will not grow or grow poorly. It has a variety of other common names such as: dooryard weed, pinkweed, and dishwater weed (taken from the old habit of throwing soapy water into the backyard, which killed grass). Although prostrate knotweed will grow in moist flowerbeds, it can withstand trampling and drought and is usually found on portions of yards which receive abuse.

As the common name indicates, prostrate knotweed grows nearly flat on the ground forming a dense mat. From the crown, stems branch out in all directions to a distance of about 2 feet. Where there is competition for light, ends of the stems may ascend up to 9 inches.

Slender stems are tough and wiry. Each joint or node (knot) is covered with a papery scale or sheath. This is a characteristic of the buckwheat family, Polygonaceae.

Small leaves are alternate on the stems³. Oblong to lance-shaped, these pale-green leaves⁴ are narrow at the base and come to a point at the tip. Basal portions of leaves often look as if they are covered with a white "mildew." Leaves commonly measure 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches long by 1/3 to 3/4 inch wide.

Flowers are small, yellowish-white to greenish, found clustered in the axils of leaves (where leaf meets stem). Flower parts may have a pinkish tinge.

Reddish-brown seeds² have a dull surface, and are 3-angled or triangular.

The root is a small, thin, taproot.

Prostrate knotweed can be effectively controlled, when plants are small and actively growing, with repeated applications of silvex and 2,4-D. Mature plants are resistant to both chemicals.

Endothall has been particularly effective for selective knotweed control, but may temporarily discolor perennial turfgrass. Also effective is dicamba (Banvel-D), which does not harm turf, but should be used with caution around ornamentals and trees.

Effective in tests, but as yet unapproved for turf use is the brush-killer 4-amino-3,5,6-trichloropicolinic acid, trademarked Tordon.

Prostrate knotweed will succumb to spot treatment of most general-contact herbicides. Due to its shallow and persistent habit of annual growth, knotweed will be one of the first weeds to re-invade a previously sterilized area and will indicate the need for re-treatment.

Prepared in cooperation with Crops Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland.

(DRAWING FROM NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL PUBLICATION NO. 36, USDA EXTENSION SERVICE)

Stuart H. Bear Elected Vice Chairman of NACA Board

Stuart H. Bear, division manager of Niagara Chemical Div., and vice president of FMC Corp., is the new vice chairman of the board of directors of the National Agricultural Chemicals Assn. He replaces T. K. Smith, Jr., vice president of Monsanto Co.

A graduate of Pennsylvania State University and the executive program in business administration of Columbia University, Bear joined the Niagara sales organization in 1931. He was promoted to division manager of Niagara in 1958.

Smith leaves the NACA board due to reassignment of his company responsibilities. He is now president of Chemstrand which takes him out of the agricultural field.

Shrub Bloom Determines Pruning Schedule

When to prune shrubs depends largely on the time they bloom, Charles E. Parks, extension landscape architect at Kansas State University, reminds applicators.

Shrubs that bloom in the summer and early fall may be pruned early in the spring before new growth produces flowers. Included in this group are hibiscus, hydrangea, crepe myrtle, privet, and floribunda roses.

Lilacs, forsythia and other spring-blooming shrubs are pruned after they have bloomed, rather than in early spring, Parks said.

Some shrubs are pruned slightly in the spring and again after they have flowered. These include cotoneaster, viburnums, and honeysuckle, except the fragrant honeysuckle which is pruned after it has flowered.

If evergreens need pruning, the red cedar varieties are pruned immediately after new growth is apparent. This is especially true where pruning is done to control size. It does not injure evergreens to prune them almost any time, Parks said.

Parks added that shaping of individual shrubs is best accomplished with single cane or twig cuts.