

Ageratum conyzoides

Recognize the problem

Family: Asteraceae (daisy family)

Common names: Billy goat weed, goat weed, blue top, mother brinkley, tropical ageratum, white weed, winter weed.

Thai: ต้นเสี้ยวเล็ก Tap suea lek (Sing Buri); เข็มแม่ฮ้าง Thiam mae hang (Loei); สาบแร้งสาบกา Sap raeng sap ka, หญ้าสาบแฮ้ง Ya sap haeng (Chiang Mai); หญ้าสาบแร้ง Ya sap raeng (Ratchaburi).

Annual broadleaved herb with green, purplish or reddish stems (0.3–1 (1.5) m tall); stem branched and covered in short white hairs on young parts and nodes; shallow fibrous roots.

Leaves: Bright green, sparsely hairy, rough with prominent veins; triangular to egg-shaped (10–110 mm long and 5–60 mm wide) margins bluntly toothed with blunt or pointed tips, in opposite pairs; hairy petioles (15–50 mm); characteristic odour when crushed, smelling like a male goat.

Flowers: Blue to lavender, fluffy, sometimes with a white head in compact terminal cluster bearing 4–18 flowerheads (each 4–5mm across and 4–6 mm long), with slender, hardly exerted styles; slightly aromatic.

Fruits: Black, 1.25–2 mm long, dry, roughly hairy, ribbed or angled, with a pappus of 5, rarely 6, rough bristles, white to cream coloured, 1.5–3 mm long with upward turning spines.

Background

Origin: Latin America.

Introduction: Accidentally as a contaminant.

Habitat: Humid tropical and subtropical regions. It thrives best in rich, moist, mineral soils with high air humidities, and tolerates shade. It grows particularly well where soil fertility is high.

Spread: The seeds are mainly spread by wind and water, but are also readily dispersed on clothing or animal fur and machines.

Invades: Croplands, plantations, pasture, grasslands, disturbed land, wasteland, urban open space, fallow land, roadsides, drainage ditches and forest edges/gaps.

Impacts: This weed reduces crop yields and is an important alternate host of a number of economically important crop pathogens and nematodes. The species is an aggressive short-term colonizer of gaps in vegetation. It can become dominant following overgrazing. In Tigray, northern Ethiopia, accidental consumption of the seeds with sorghum was implicated in the cause of liver disease resulting in the deaths of 27 people and numerous livestock.

A. conyzoides whole plant showing leaf shape and flowers. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



Seedlings of *A. conyzoides*. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



Scientific name(s) > **Ageratum conyzoides**

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



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