

WEEDS OF GUAM

Ruellia prostrata

Weed #A2023-3

Acanthaceae



Ruellia prostrata along sidewalk, in full sun



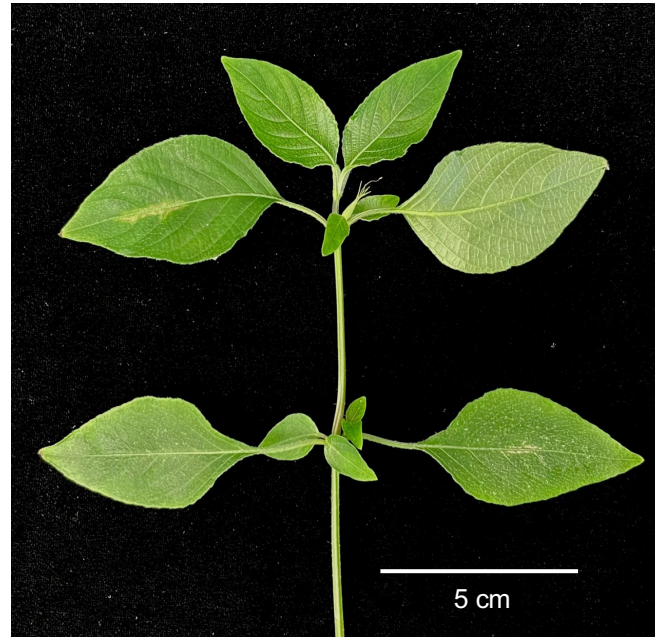
Pale purple 5-lobed corolla, only flowering in the morning



Creeping habit with small, light green leaves, in full sun



Ruellia prostrata under a shade



Erect growth with large, deep green leaves, in shaded area

SCIENTIFIC NAME:	<i>Ruellia prostrata</i> Poir.
COMMON NAME:	Bell Weed, Prostrate Wild Petunia, Black Weed.
SYNONYMS:	<i>Dipteracanthus prostratus</i> Nees, <i>Ruellia patula</i> Jacq. var. <i>prostrata</i> (Poir.) Chiov.
DISTRIBUTION:	Native to Africa, Arabian Peninsula, Indian Subcontinent, Christmas Island and SW Pacific. Naturalized sporadically in Assam and Pacific islands.

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Mature fruit releasing seeds

Open capsule after seed release

Seedlings (20-day old)

Close-up of a seed

FORM:	Prostrate herb with many branches; or climbing to erect subshrub to 1.5 m tall.
ROOT:	Many adventitious root formed at stem node of woody rootstock (or rhizome).
STEM:	Quadrangular, green to greyish green. Young stems pubescent.
LEAVES:	Simple, blade broadly ovate to elliptic, apex acute to rounded, margin undulate to approximately entire, surface subglabrous to pubescent; oppositely arranged.
INFLORESCENCE:	Solitary or in 2–3-flowered axillary cymes, peduncles and pedicels glabrous to pubescent. Flowers in both wet and dry seasons on Guam.
FLOWER:	Calyx: 5-lobed, filiform; corolla: white to mauve or purple, 5-lobed, falls early in the morning, corolla tube narrowly funnel shaped; stamens: 4, white, included in throat, didynamous, anthers not or slightly overlapping, filaments fused at base then separate; style: white to purple; ovary: pubescent.
FRUIT:	Dehiscent capsule, oblanceolate to clavate, brown, with 8-18 seeds.
SEED:	Ovoid to orbicular, grey to brown, with papery edges.
HABITAT:	Occur in lawns and disturbed fields.
PROPOGATION:	Seeds, stem cuttings.
USES:	Medicinally used in some culture.
MISCELLANEOUS:	Can be an invasive weed.

References:

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Vollesen, K., Polhill, R. M., & Beentje, H. J. (1985). Flora of Tropical East Africa. Crown Agents for the Colonies.

WFO (2023). *Ruellia prostrata* Poir. (<http://www.worldfloraonline.org/taxon/wfo-000400882>). Accessed on 14 Dec 2023.

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