

LOUISIANA HOME LAWN SERIES

A guide to maintaining a healthy Louisiana lawn



Common Purslane

Description

Common purslane (*Portulaca oleracea* L.), also known as little hogweed or pursley, is a prostrate, succulent, summer annual broadleaf weed commonly found throughout Louisiana. It is easily distinguished by its thick, succulent leaves and purple or reddish stems (Figure 1). Common purslane spreads by seed and will flower during the summer and fall if moisture is sufficient. It is commonly found in locations with thinning turf or exposed soil and can be an indicator of high nitrogen fertility in soils.

Identification

Common purslane exhibits a prostrate, mat-forming growth habit (Figure 1). Common purslane has green, oblong to spoon-shaped succulent leaves with smooth, sometimes pinkish margins (Figure 2). Leaves lack a petiole and are clustered in an alternate or nearly opposite arrangement at stem joints (Figure 3). Stems are smooth and have a red-to-purple coloration (Figure 3).

Stems extend from a center taproot and form prostrate mats on the soil surface. Flowers are yellow in color with five petals and are typically found in leaf axils or terminally (Figure 4). The fruits are round capsules that split in the middle and contain many shiny, brownish-black seeds. For more information on common purslane identification and characterization, visit the [USDA Plants Database](https://plants.usda.gov/plantfactsheet/PORTOL.htm).



Figure 1. Prostrate, mat-forming growth habit of common purslane.

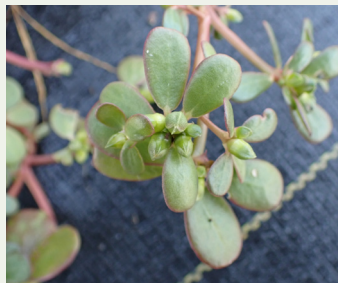


Figure 2. Common purslane has oblong to spoon-shaped succulent leaves with smooth, pinkish margins.



Figure 3. Common purslane has clustered leaves in alternate to nearly opposite arrangement and smooth, reddish stems.



Figure 4. Yellow flower of common purslane.
Photos by Eric DeBoer.

Cultural control practices

The best way to prevent or reduce weed encroachment is to maintain a healthy lawn through proper fertilization, soil pH management and regular mowing. Properly maintaining a lawn through these cultural practices promotes dense and vigorous turfgrass, allowing it to better compete with weeds. Below are the recommended mowing heights and nitrogen fertility rates recommended for each turfgrass species. In addition to these lawn care practices, manual removal of weeds may also be necessary.

TURFGRASS SPECIES	MOWING HEIGHT	NITROGEN RATE (PER 1,000 FT ² PER YEAR)
Bermudagrass	1 to 2 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Centipedegrass	1 to 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds
St. Augustinegrass	2.5 to 3 inches	Up to 3 pounds
Zoysiagrass	1 to 2.5 inches	Up to 2 pounds

Chemical control practices

In addition to cultural practices, herbicide applications may be required to achieve effective weed control.

When applying any type of herbicide, you must follow the manufacturer's labeled directions.

For more information regarding pesticides for turfgrass, please reference the [Louisiana Suggested Chemical Weed Control Guide](#).

PREEMERGENCE HERBICIDE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS	ST. AUGUSTINEGRASS	CENTIPEDEGRASS	ZOYSIAGRASS	BERMUDAGRASS
Atrazine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dormant
Benefin + Oryzalin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dimethanamid	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dithiopyr	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dithiopyr¹ + Isoxaben	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indaziflam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Isoxaben	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Metolachlor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oryzalin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pendimethalin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prodiamine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prodiamine + Imazaquin + Simazine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prodiamine + Sulfentrazone	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Simazine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

POSTEMERGENCE HERBICIDE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS	ST. AUGUSTINEGRASS	CENTIPEDEGRASS	ZOYSIAGRASS	BERMUDAGRASS
2,4-D ²	No	No	Yes	Yes
2,4-D + Dicamba + Mecoprop (MCP)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2,4-D + Dicamba + Mecoprop (MCP) + Carfentrazone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2,4-D + Mecoprop (MCP) + Dichlorprop (2,4-DP)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amicarbazone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Atrazine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dormant
Iodosulfuron + Thienicarbazone + Dicamba	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Metsulfuron-methyl	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Metsulfuron-methyl + Dicamba	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Metsulfuron-methyl + Sulfentrazone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Penoxsulam + Sulfentrazone + 2,4-D + Dicamba	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

¹Products in bold provide excellent control of common purslane.

²2,4-D is a common herbicide used to control broadleaf weeds. However, centipedegrass and St. Augustinegrass are sensitive to 2,4-D, and its use can potentially damage or even kill these grasses. It is generally not recommended to use 2,4-D on centipedegrass or St. Augustinegrass unless the product label specifically states it is safe for use on this type of grass and the product is applied according to the label instructions.

For information regarding weed identification and control options, please contact your local [LSU AgCenter Extension office](#).

Sources

Murphy, T.R., & Colvin, D.L. (1992). Weeds of Southern turfgrasses: Golf courses, lawns, roadsides, recreational areas, commercial sod. University of Florida, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Patton, A.J., & Elmore, M. (2023). Turfgrass Weed Control for Professionals. Purdue University Extension.

Author

Eric DeBoer, Turfgrass Specialist and Assistant Professor, School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Science



Visit our website: www.LSUAgCenter.com

Pub. 3624-HHHH (online) 7/24

The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.