SS-AGR-80

UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

NATURAL AREA WEEDS: Skunkvine (*Paederia foetida*)[1]

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- Fast-growing and has wide-ranging adaptability to different light, soil, and salt conditions.
- Invading disturbed areas and undisturbed native plant communities, including sandhill, rockland hammock, upland mixed forest, swamps and floodplains.
- Creates dense canopies leading to damage or death of native vegetation (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Skunkvine growing over native shrubs.

- Has smothered out one of the remaining populations of the endemic, federally endangered Cooley's water willow.
- Spread by transport of rooted fragments and seeds.
- Also a weed in landscapes.

Native to eastern and southern Asia, skunkvine is an invasive plant species that was introduced to the USDA Field Station near Brooksville (Hernando Co., FL) before 1897 (Morton 1976). By 1916 it was already reported as a troublesome weed in that area. It was noted as escaping to thickets and fence rows in peninsular Florida in 1933 (Small, 1933). By 1977, it was considered an economically important weed (Reed 1977). It was included in Category I, "Species that are invading and disrupting native plant communities in Florida," of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council List of Invasive Species in 1993. It was added to the Florida Noxious Weed List (5B-57.007 F.A.C.) in 1999, making it illegal to possess, move, or release in Florida.

1. This document is SS-AGR-80, one of a series of the Agronomy Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. First printed August 2000. Revised July 2006. Reviewed January 2010. Please visit the EDIS Website at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.

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Financial support provided in part by a grant from the Florida Water Management District.

Skunkvine is most common in west central Florida, but is also documented northward to Suwannee and Gadsden counties and southward to Broward County (see Atlas of Florida vascular Plants, www.plantatlas.usf.edu, for current distribution) and is reported from natural areas in Hillsborough, Hernando, Pasco, Citrus, Marion, Sumter, Lake, Orange, and Polk counties (see FLEPPC Exotic Plant Database, www.fleppc.org).

How to Identify

- Perennial twining vine from woody rootstock.
- Leaves opposite (rarely in whorls of 3), oval to lance shaped, often lobed at base, 2 to 11 cm (1 to 4.3 in) long with conspicuous stipules (appendages at bases of leaves), leaf margins without teeth, leaf surfaces hairy or non-hairy (Figure 2, Figure 5).

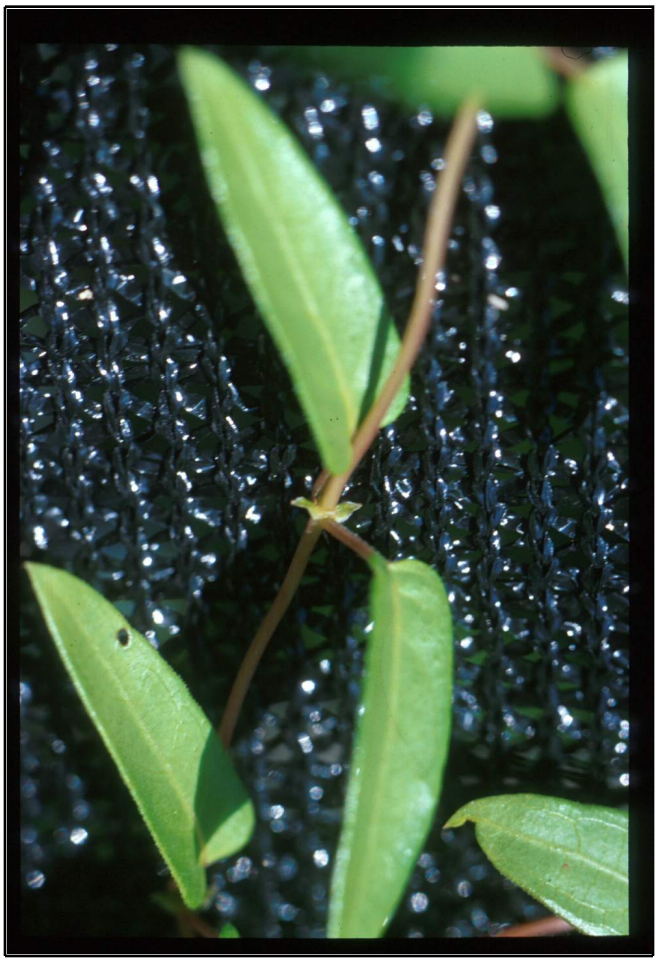

Figure 2. Skunkvine leaves and stipules.

- Leaf stalks commonly to 6 cm (2.4 in) long.
- Leaves and stems have disagreeable odor, especially when crushed.
- Flowers (mostly late summer and fall) small; grayish pink or lilac in color; in broad or long, "leafy," curving clusters; petals joined to form tube (corolla) with 5 (usually) spreading lobes; corolla density hairy (Figure 3, Figure 5).

Figure 3. Skunkvine flowers.

- Fruit (persisting through winter) shiny brown, nearly round, to 0.7 cm (0.3 in) wide. Two seeds, black, roundish; often dotted with white, needle-shaped crystals (Figure 4, Figure 5).

• Sewer vine (*P. cruddasiana*)--also a serious pest but less widespread--is similar but with oval, flattened fruits and distinctly winged seeds.

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Control

Some hand removal of skunkvine in landscape situations will be necessary but large-scale hand removal in natural areas has proven ineffective. Cut stems die above, but regrow from below. **Always** be careful not to dispose of skunkvine where seeds can germinate or stem fragements take root. Flooding decreases vigor but plants remain alive when submersed for at least 192 days. Herbicides that contain the active ingredients triclopyr amine (Garlon 3A and Brush-B-Gone), triclopyr ester (Garlon 4), and imazapic (Plateau) provide effective control. Garlon 3A, Garlon 4, and Plateau are available at agriculture supply stores. Brush-B-Gon is available

Figure 4. Mature skunkvine fruits.

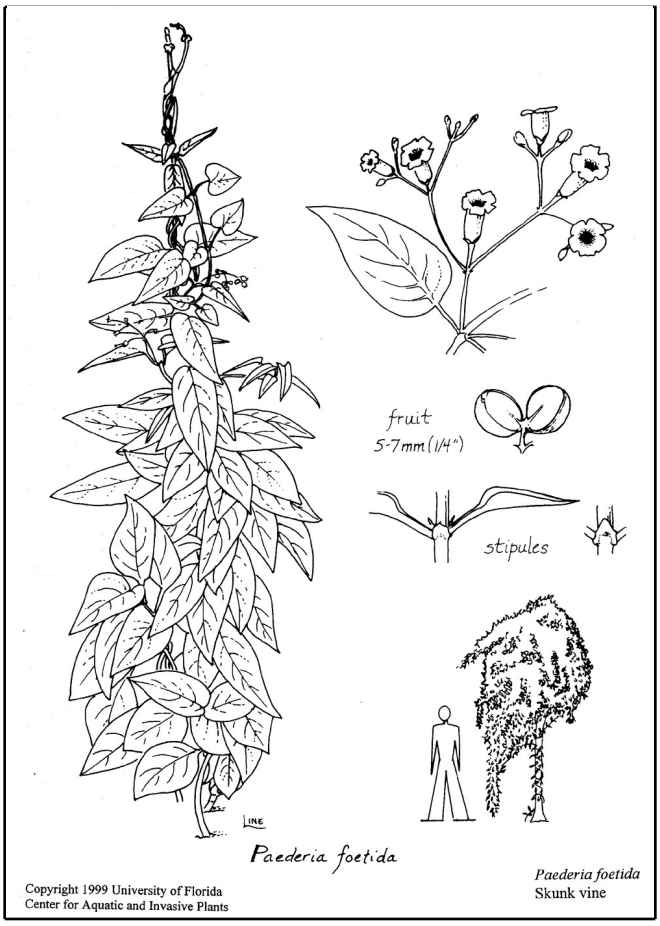

Figure 5. Line drawing.

at hardware and garden supply stores. Complete control is not achieved with a single application; follow-up applications are necessary. Avoid contact of herbicides with sensitive non-target vegetation. Use herbicides according to all directions on the label. See Table 1.

Literature Cited

Morton, J.F. 1976. Pestiferous spread of many ornamental and fruit species in south Florida. Proc. Fla. State Hort. Soc. 89:348-53.

Reed, C.F. 1977. Economically important foreign weeds: potential problems in the United States. Washington, D.C. APHIS, USDA. Ag. Handbook No. 498. 746 pp.

Small, J.K. 1933. Manual of the Southeastern Flora, Parts one and two. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. 1554 pp. Facsimile reprint 1972, New York: Hafner publishing.

Table 1. Herbicides for control of Skunkvine (*Paederia foetida*).

Garlon 3A	• Broadcast to foliage 4-8 pints per acre diluted in water. • Thoroughly cover all foliage to wet with 0.5% solution. • Apply 10% solution in 6-inch band chest high to foliage of vertically climbing vines.
Garlon 4	• Broadcast to foliage 1.5 - 4.5 pints per acre diluted in water. • Thoroughly cover all foliage to wet with 0.2 - 0.6% solution. • Apply 1.0 - 10% solution in 6 to 20-inch band chest high to foliage of vertically climbing vines.
Brush-B-Gon	• Mix 4 ounces per gallon of water and spray to wet foliage.
Plateau	• Thoroughly cover all foliage to wet with 1.0 - 1.5% solution.