

(revision date:4/7/2021)

Weeds: Plantain (Broadleaf, Buckhorn)(Plantago spp.)

family: Plantaginaceae

cycle Perennial

plant type: Broadleaf

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

Broadleaf plantain leaves are all basal, forming a low-growing rosette. Broadleaf plantain bears many fibrous roots, from which new plants can occasionally arise. The crown of broadleaf plantain is not woolly or hairy. The leaves have several prominent, parallel veins and may be lightly hairy. The leaf blade is typically three to seven inches long and one to two inches wide, abruptly narrowing where it joins the petiole, which may be as long as the leaves. The margins of the leaves are often wavy. Flowers are borne in dense clusters at the tip of leafless shoots which reach 5 to 15 inches tall. Individual flowers are inconspicuous and yellowish-white. Seeds are glossy light to dark brown and about 1/16 inch long.

Buckhorn plantain leaves are all basal, in a rosette. Buckhorn plantain has a short, thick taproot with fibrous lateral roots. Older plants develop a thick underground stem which can occasionally produce new plants. The crown may be somewhat woolly or hairy, but the leaves are generally hairless or nearly so. The leaf blade is long (four to twelve inches) and narrow (up to 1 1/2 inches), tapering gradually into the petiole, which attaches to the crown. Three to five parallel veins are obvious on the leaf blades. Flowers are borne in dense clusters one or two inches long, on top of leafless shoots which may reach eighteen inches tall. Individual flowers are inconspicuous, but the stamens form an obvious ring around the spike as the flowers come into bloom. Seeds are shiny brown to black and about 1/16 inch long.

Habitat

Broadleaf plantain is often found in lawns, gardens, and other cultivated or disturbed areas including pastures and roadsides.

Buckhorn plantain is often found in lawns, gardens, and other disturbed areas such as roadsides and pastures. It is especially common in poor or thin lawns in droughty areas. It is very difficult to control.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Cultivation (rototilling or hoeing) will effectively eliminate plants.
- ~ Careful digging is useful to manage weed populations. However, digging can carry undesirable weed seed to the surface and foster further germination.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

Apply according to label directions. Glyphosate products should be applied as spot treatments only!

NOTE: Some ingredients listed here are only available in combination. Read the label carefully on combination products to make sure the product is suitable for your specific situation.

Landscape Areas

Turf Areas

Bare Ground Areas

- glyphosate
- dichlobenil
- products containing triclopyr
- products containing 2,4-D

- products containing 2,4-D
- triclopyr
- 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba

- glyphosate
- products containing 2,4-D
- triclopyr
- dichlobenil

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Images



~ Caption: Broadleaf plantain
~ Photo by: R. Parker



~ Caption: Buckhorn plantain
~ Photo by: R. Parker



~ Caption: Broadleaf plantain flowers
~ Photo by: D.G. Swan



~ Caption: Buckhorn plantain flowers
~ Photo by: T. W. Miller



~ Caption: Buckhorn plantain
~ Photo by: T. W. Miller



~ Caption: Broadleaf plantain rosette
~ Photo by: T. W. Miller