

June 28, 2020

## Seven weed families

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On May 22 and 29, 2020, with UF/Miami-Dade County Extension Commercial Urban Horticulture Agent Henry Mayer, M.S., I zoomed, “Weed identification by families” and “Weed identification in practice.” The intended focus and most examples were weeds of South Florida landscapes including turfgrass areas and natural areas.

### **Asteraceae (35,000 species), sunflower or daisy family, compuestes**

Inflorescences compound heads of many flowers held tightly by bracts called phyllaries. Flowers have tubular corollas, may be ray and/or disk; anthers fused in a tube. Fruit dry, one-seeded, topped by pappus of scales or awns often barbed so as to attach to fur or clothing, or feathery filaments acting as a parachute to disperse in wind. Mostly temperate.

Examples: cupid’s shavingbrush, Spanish needles, straggler daisy, lilac tasselflower, and the ornamental Mexican flamevine



### **Commelinaceae (700 species), dayflower family**

Leaves fleshy with closed sheaths; flowers often in a spathe, the tepals often purple. This is a monocot family and is neither grass nor sedge.

Examples: common dayflower, doveweed, and purplequeen.



### **Cyperaceae (5,500 species), sedges**

Culms 3-sided, rarely noded; leaves narrow, 3-ranked. Flowers small, in partial inflorescences, often burlike (spikelets or spicoids).

Examples: purple nutsedge, green kyllinga, bunch sedges, papyrus, and the native species sawgrass (not a grass).



### **Fabaceae (22,000 species), pea family, leguminosae**

Leaves usually pinnately compound or trifoliate, almost always alternate, with stipules. The petals are separate and for the major group called the subfamily Papilionoideae, the corollas are butterfly-shaped (banner and wings and keel). Fruit a pod (legume) which splits on two sutures. This family includes two other large, important subfamilies the Caesalpinoideae and Mimosoideae with more regular flowers often in powderpuff heads.

Examples: creeping beggarweed, cheesy toes, and rosary pea

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**Malvaceae (5,000 species), mallow family**

Petals showy, five; stamen filaments are fused into a tube. Fruit is a capsule of usually 5 segments. Leaf veins usually palmately or 3-veined from the base. Usually have stellate (star-shaped) hairs. Combined with several families of large tropical trees such as cacao, Ceiba, baobab, and Tabebuia; the old Malvaceae sensu stricto only 2,000 species.

Examples: southern sida, Caesar weed, the ornamental hibiscus, and crops cotton and okra



**Poaceae (12,000 species), grasses, gramineas**

Culms rounded or flattened, with nodes. Leaves are 2-ranked with a distinctive sheath, blade, and ligule. Flowers small, not showy, in specialized spikelets with florets with lemmas and paleas. Fruit a caryopsis. Worldwide, even Antarctica.

Examples: giant reed, bull paspalum; the crops rice, wheat, corn, and sorghum; turfgrasses and even bamboo



**Rubiaceae (14,000 species), coffee family, madders**

Corolla tubular with stamens attached, usually colorful. Leaves opposite or whorled, simple, margins entire. Stipules often interpetiolar.

Examples: largeflowered pusley ,whitehead broom; native wild coffee



Can you pick out the families below?

