

SHOULD GIANT CHICKWEED (MYOSOTAN AQUATICUM) STILL BE CONSIDERED A WISCONSIN WILDFLOWER? Michael P. Crotser and Scott Bollman, Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Research Assistant, Department of Plant and Earth Science, University of Wisconsin at River Falls, River Falls, WI, 54022.

Giant chickweed (*Myosotan aquaticum*), a native species of Europe, was thought to predominately inhabit moist, natural areas of Wisconsin. In recent years its presence has been confirmed in perennial crops in Pierce, Green, St. Croix, Lafayette, Grant, Columbia, Sauk, and Shawano counties. Due to morphological similarities between the chickweed species, presence and distribution of giant chickweed has likely been underestimated in Wisconsin. The objective of this study was to develop classification methods for taxonomic separation from other chickweeds in agronomic settings and to provide preliminary data on chemical control in alfalfa and pastures. Giant chickweed is a perennial and a member of the Caryophyllaceae family. Giant chickweed's growth is more robust when compared to other chickweed's in Wisconsin. The leaves, stem tissue, and flowers of giant chickweed are larger with a typical plant height of 60 cm, indicating potentially greater competitive ability in crops such as alfalfa. Other characteristics include rough, angular sticky stems that root at the nodes, sessile cordate leaves, and flowers with five deeply notched white petals. In a study metsulfuron, dicamba, 2,4-D, 2,4-D + dicamba, imazethapyr and metribuzin were applied at a full label rate to active growing giant chickweed in pasture with a CO₂ backpack sprayer. Spray volume was 25 GPA and plots were sprayed on July 26, 2001. At 21 DAT metribuzin provided 93% control, whereas metsulfuron and dicamba provided 87% and 80% control, respectively.