

CITRUS WEED SPOTLIGHT

Dollar weed, water pennywort

Hydrocotyle spp. (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*, *H. bonariensis* and *H. verticillata*)



By Stephen H. Futch
and David W. Hall

Life cycle: herbaceous perennial
Plant height: on land less than an inch to several inches tall
Leaves: alternate; blades shiny green, blunt-toothed, almost round; stalks attached near the middle underneath the blade and “umbrella-like,” although normally only an inch or two on land, stalks can be up to 1 foot or more long in deeper water.



Stem: horizontally spreading, rooted or floating
Flowers: small, white to greenish-

white, clustered at the upper end of the flower spike, on individual whorled stalks (*H. umbellata* and *bonariensis*) or in several whorls along the upper flower stem with short flower stalks (*H. verticillata*); one simple branched cluster (*H. umbellata*), two or three branched clusters (*H. bonariensis*), several small whorls along upper flower stem with very short flower stalks (*H. verticillata*).

Seeds: paired nutlets, approximately one-sixteenth to one-eighth inch long, ribbed or ridged

Growth characteristics: flowering March to July, and sometimes out of season; reproduces by seeds and vegetatively by fragmentation of the stem

Distribution: all are native; *H. bonariensis* — outer Coastal Plain, west from North Carolina into Texas; *H. umbellata* — Nova Scotia and Minnesota south into Texas; *H. verticillata* — coastal plain and piedmont, Massachusetts west into California; all three range south from Texas into South America; ponds, ditches, lakes, seeps, marshes, prairies, streams; frequent in irrigated crops, lawns, gardens and flower beds

Comments: grows on land in moist conditions and outward from the shoreline into open water; floating mats can break off from shoreline plants; all three species can grow together in mixed populations; can become weedy in many irrigated situations.

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