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# Citrus Weed Spotlight

## Gambian dayflower

*Commelina gambiae*

By Stephen H. Futch, David W. Hall and Brent Sellers

**LIFE CYCLE:** Herbaceous annual, 4 to 12 inches tall

**LEAVES:** Stalkless; blades linear to lance-shaped, three-quarter to 6 inches long and less than 1-inch wide, smooth or sparsely hairy on both surfaces



**STEM:** Ascending or sprawling along the ground

**FLOWER:** Two flowers contained in a leaf-like, boat-shaped bract, bract stalked, from leaf axils, bract sparsely hairy, about one-half to three-quarter inch long, basal margin fused; flowers not quite one-half inch wide; three petals, upper two petals peach- or apricot-colored, lower petal white and tiny

**FRUIT:** A three-valved capsule, about 1/8-inch long

**SEEDS:** Five per capsule, brown, about 1/16-inch long, with a net-veined surface

**PROPAGATED BY:** Seeds

**COMMENTS:** First found in Florida in 1976. Habitats include groves, roadsides, pastures and other sandy, open, disturbed areas. It has been found from Marion County in the northern peninsula of Florida south into Broward County in the southern peninsula. Gambian dayflower is a native of western Africa. The species is named for Gambia, a west African country in which it is found. A less-used second common name, African dayflower, leads to confusion as there are other kinds of dayflowers in Africa.

**CONTROL:** Since this is a relatively new species to citrus groves, control recommendations for this weed are rather limited. One could assume that chemical control methods for other dayflower species may provide control of Gambian dayflower. 🍊

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