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Citrus Weed Spotlight

Primrose-willow, long-fruited primrose-willow, Mexican primrose-willow

Ludwigia octovalvis

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

LIFE CYCLE: perennial

LEAVES: alternate leaves, 1 ½ to 4 inches long, blade obovate to lanceolate, often narrowly so, smooth to hairy, lacking a leaf stalk (sessile) or leaf stalk very short, tip tapering to sharp point

STEM: erect, often woody below, smooth to hairy, 6 or more feet tall

FLOWER: yellow with 4 petals, 1 inch in diameter, terminal, flowering more frequently in June–December

FRUIT: four-angled cylindrical capsule 1 to 2 inches long, ribbed

SEEDS: tiny, shiny, reddish, slightly angular to rounded

PROPAGATED BY: seeds

GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS: plant often becomes shrubby

COMMENT: usually found in wetter areas of the grove or along ditch banks; can quickly cover an entire disturbed wet area; found throughout the state; north into North Carolina and west into Texas; pantropical

CONTROL: Bromacil, indaziflam, norflurazon, pendimethalin and simazine provide pre-emergence control of primrose-willow emerging from seed. Glyphosate, paraquat dichloride or products containing 2,4-D provide good to excellent activity on small plants.

Stephen H. Futch is a University of Florida multi-county Extension agent at the Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred; David W. Hall is a retired botanist with the University of Florida departments of botany and natural sciences in Gainesville; Brent Sellers is a University of Florida associate professor at the Range Cattle Research and Education Center at Ona. 🍊

