

Pigweed (Amaranth)



Figure 1 Red root pigweed seedling



Figure 2 Mature pigweed



Figure 3 Pigweed seed/flower head

Pigweed is an annual that grows very fast in open, sunny areas producing multiple thousands of seeds and producing new plants year after year. There are over 60 varieties with some being ornamental and others used for its seeds. The smooth and red root varieties are common garden weeds.

Identification

Seedlings have alternate, ovate leaves; depending on variety, stem and veining may be reddish. Mature plants are tall, strong plants with oval-ish leaves and lots of small greenish flowers set close together. Pigweeds have taproots, not too deep, but branching and often reddish in color like some stems and undersides of leaves.

Control Methods

Remove before flowers and seeds develop.
Pull by hand or dig out, removing all roots.

Additional Information/Resources:

- Iowa State University Extension [Identification of the weedy pigweeds and water hems of Iowa](#)
- Pigweed Identification, Wisconsin Crop Weed Science, UW-Madison [Pigweed Identification](#)
- Dane County UW Extension Horticulture Hotline [608-224-3721](tel:608-224-3721) (M-F, 9 am-12 noon, April 15 – October 31) or horticulture@countyofdane.com