

Smooth dock *Rumex altissimus*

Description

Habit

Perennial, unbranched or sparingly branched reaching a height of 1.5-4 ft.

Leaves

Alternate, 4-10 in. long, 3 in. wide, lance-elliptic in shape, hairless, toothless, somewhat shiny, pointed at the tip, wedge-shaped at the base, mostly flat with wavy edges; lower leaves are the largest and long-stalked becoming smaller and shorter stalked as they ascend.

Stems

Light green in color, stout, erect, hairless, ribbed, and unbranched or few-branched, often with short shoots or leaf clumps in the axils just below





the flower clusters.

Flowers

1/4 in. long (4.5-6 mm.), light green in color, 3-sided with 2 series of tepals; borne in branching clusters, numerous whorls of 10-20 slender-stalked flowers, lower whorls more widely separated.

Fruits and Seeds

Each flower produces a single seed, wrapped in a persistent tepal that forms a dry brown capsule. Seeds are 3-sided, egg-shaped, with a short tapered tip, dark reddish brown in color and 2-2.8 mm. long.

Habitat

Native to North America. Can be found in disturbed sites, ditches, roadsides, wet fields, marshes, shorelines, riverbanks.

Reproduction

By seed.

Similar

There are several native and Eurasian Rumex species that are similar. All can be distinguished by their leaf characteristics, tepal shape, grain size and shape, and flower stalk length to name a few.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Credits

The information provided in this factsheet was gathered from Minnesota Wildflowers. Individual species images that appear with a number in a black box are courtesy of the Bugwood.org network (<http://www.invasive.org>). Individual photo author credits may not be included due to the small display size of the images and subsequent difficulty of reading the provided text. All other images appear courtesy of Google (<http://images.google.com>).