

Common plantain

Plantago major

Description

Herbaceous perennial with a long history of medicinal properties.

Habit

Herbaceous perennial with a rosette of leaves 6-12 in. in diameter.

Leaves

Mature leaves are thick, leathery, broad, oval, up to 12 in. long and has 3 or more prominent veins parallel to leaf edge. Edges are smooth or irregularly toothed. Attached to compressed stem of the rosette by a thick green petiole that is as long as leaf blade.

Stems

Erect, flowering stems, 5-15 in. tall, leafless, unbranched, terminate in cluster of inconspicuous flowers.

Flowers

Inconspicuous, greenish or whitish in color,





clustered in long narrow spikes.

Fruits and Seeds

Egg shaped capsule, less than 0.25 in. long, split across middle into 2 equal segments containing 6-20 brown, glossy, ridged seeds.

Habitat

Native to Eurasia. Can be found growing in rich, moist soils including turfgrass, landscapes, orchards, nurseries, waste places, and cultivated fields.

Reproduction

By seed and vegetatively via root fragments. Capable of producing 14,000 seeds per year with a viability of up to 60 years.

Similar

Buckthorn plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) which is similar in appearance but has narrower, lance-shaped leaves and a much more compressed flower cluster.

Credits

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