



Redroot Pigweed

DID YOU KNOW?

One redroot pigweed plant can produce over 100,000 seeds! Some can live up to 40 years in the soil.

Flowers grow together on a spike.



The fruit grows from the flower.



Tiny seeds are inside the fruit.



THE REDROOT PIGWEED PLANT

Redroot pigweed is an annual. The plant can reach to 2 meters (6 1/2 ft) high in one growing season.

The black, shiny seeds sprout and grow in late spring and early summer when the soil becomes warm.



The leaves are diamond-shaped and rough.



Small green flowers are tightly packed in tall spikes at the top of the plant.

Some flowers are also in clusters along the stem.



It flowers in late summer and fall.

The taproot is red.

The stems are reddish and hairy.

ORIGIN

Redroot pigweed is native to tropical America. Today it can be found on every continent.



Native Americans of North America have traditionally used redroot pigweed as a vegetable and a grain crop.

CLASSIFYING REDROOT PIGWEED

FAMILY

Amaranthaceae

In Greek, this means everlasting. Amaranth flowers last much longer than most other flowers.



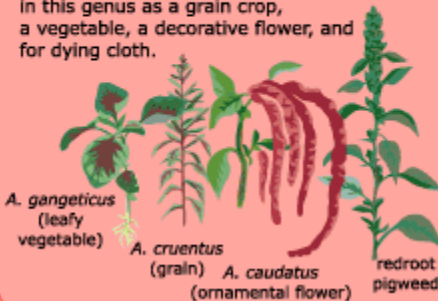
redroot pigweed

Male and female flowers grow on the same plant.

GENUS

Amaranthus

Since ancient times, people have used plants in this genus as a grain crop, a vegetable, a decorative flower, and for dyeing cloth.



A. gangeticus (leafy vegetable)

A. cruentus (grain)

A. caudatus (ornamental flower)

redroot pigweed

SPECIES

retroflexus

In Latin this means "bent back."

The species was given this name by Swedish naturalist, Carl Linnaeus, in 1753. We still use the name today.



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FRIEND...

Small plants that do not yet have flowers are used in salads or are cooked like spinach. The seeds can be roasted and ground to make flour. The whole seeds can be cooked to make cereal.



The seeds are food for many insects, birds, and mammals.

house finch

...OR FOE?

Farmers and gardeners consider redroot pigweed to be one of the worst weeds. Each plant can produce thousands of long-lasting seeds that can sprout and grow in almost any soil.



I'm hoeing out this redroot pigweed before it goes to seed. They say, "One year of seeding means seven years of weeding!"

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