

# Common Beggar's-tick (Hairy Beggar's-tick), *Bidens alba* (L.) DC.<sup>1</sup>

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## Classification

Common Names: Common Beggar's-tick (Hairy Beggar's-tick)

Scientific Name: *Bidens alba* (L.) DC.

Family: Compositae (Asteraceae), Sunflower Family

## Seedling

The cotyledons are linear with the midvein evident as a depression on the upper surface (). The first true leaves are opposite and deeply cut into segments, each being elliptic or nearly so and opposite.

## Mature Plant

Common Beggar's-tick is an annual or short-lived perennial with a tap root and often roots at lower nodes, with the stems erect or bending at the base (Figure 2). The opposite leaves are compound, 2-10 cm long and 1-3.5 cm wide. The leaf edges are toothed and the underside of the leaf is hairy. The flowers are daisy-like. The outer flowers are petal-like white rays. The flowers in the center form a disc which has many, small, yellow flowers. The seeds are 4-angled and

spindle shaped with 2-6 sharp-pointed projections at the top.



Figure 1. Seedling, Common Beggar's-tick (Hairy Beggar's-tick), *Bidens alba* (L.) DC.

## History

The Latin genus name *Bidens* means two-toothed and refers to the two projections usually found at the top of the seed. The Latin species name *alba* means white and alludes to the white flowers.

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Figure 2. Mature Plant, Common Beggar's-tick (Hairy Beggar's-tick), *Bidens alba* (L.) DC.

## Habitat

This weed is common in disturbed areas throughout Florida. It is found virtually everywhere in the subtropics and tropics of both hemispheres.

## Biology

The seeds detach easily and projections at the top cling to passing animals. The seeds germinate easily, but germination can be enhanced by slitting the end. A plant produces an average of 1,205 seeds.

## Control

Hairy beggar's-tick is easily controlled by most broadleaf herbicides: 2,4-D, dicamba, triclopyr, etc. However, this weed is a prolific seed producer and the seed germinate readily in May and throughout the summer. A herbicide that does not possess soil activity will quickly control the plants present, but reestablishment from seed can occur rapidly. Aminopyralid has been shown to effectively control this species with preemergence and postemergence activity. Applied at 7 oz/A, Milestone (2 lb/gal aminopyralid) provides residual control for approximately 4 months after application.