

Santa Rosa County Cooperative Extension Teaching and Demonstration Gardens

Chamberbitters Short-Stemmed Chamberbitter aka Gripeweed *Phyllanthus urinaria* Long-Stalked Phyllanthus *Phyllanthus tenellus*

Short-stemmed chamberbitter is a small, leafy herb with multiple thin branches and fruits or flowers hanging below the leaves. The short-stemmed variety rarely grows above 12 inches tall. The leaves are arranged in two rows on the branchlets and are thin and oblong, with smooth margins, resembling a mimosa seedling. Wart-like seeds can be found on the underside of chamberbitter stems.

Long-stalked phyllanthus grows up to 2 feet tall. In home landscapes you usually see it under 12 inches tall, but the stem is still much longer and less branched than short-stemmed chamberbitter and seeds are held on short petioles.

Control: Management of chamberbitter is best achieved through the integrated use of mechanical, cultural, and chemical methods. Hand pulling of these weeds is an option, especially in flower beds. Do not shake the soil from the roots. In doing so, you may inadvertently spread seeds. If you choose to manage these weeds by hand-pulling, scout often and pull them as soon as you notice them. Once the mature plants are removed, a thick layer of mulch is effective in keeping chamberbitter out of landscape beds. Apply mulch 2-3 inches thick and weed as needed. For more significant infestations and on large plots, **chemical control** may be the best choice for controlling chamberbitter. Non-selective, post-emergent herbicides, like glyphosate (Roundup) can be used in thick patches or for spot treatment. When using a non-selective herbicide, remember to protect turfgrass and other plants from spray drift or any contact, especially regarding ornamental plants and trees.



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Photo: Long-stalked
Atlas of Florida Plants