

(revision date:4/7/2021)

## ***Weeds: Nightshades(Solanum spp.)***

family: Solanaceae

cycle Annual/Perennial

plant type: Broadleaf

**Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.**

### ***Biology***

Nightshades are annual or perennial taprooted plants that spread by seeds. They usually have spreading, branched stems to three feet tall. The alternate leaves are broad with pointed tips. They grow one to three inches long and typically have wavy margins. Leaves and stems generally appear smooth and hairless to somewhat hairy. Silverleaf nightshade (*Solanum eleagnifolium*) has dense, short hairs that give it a silvery appearance. The star-shaped flowers are borne in clusters in the leaf axils and are white to bluish with yellow centers (somewhat resembling tomato flowers in shape). The round to oval berries are green when unripe and, depending on species, yellow, orange, red or purplish-black when ripe. The small green calyx at the base of the fruit is inconspicuous and typically does not enclose or cup the berry. Black nightshade (*S. nigrum*) is a host for the Colorado potato beetle.

**SPECIAL INFORMATION:** All parts of nightshades including foliage and fruit are toxic. In WASHINGTON and OREGON, silverleaf nightshade is designated as a Class 'A' noxious weed. Eradication or intensive control is **REQUIRED** by law. In addition, it is on the Washington and Oregon noxious weed quarantine lists, which prohibit sale, purchase, and transport of plants, seeds, and plant parts. Consult your local Noxious Weed Control Board for more information.

### ***Habitat***

Nightshades are a weed of waste places and fields on rich soils. They frequently grow in the shade and easily invade disturbed sites. They are not usually a problem in maintained lawn and turfgrass.

### ***Management Options***

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ Maintaining a healthy planting or turf area to provide competition will prevent weed establishment.
- ~ Cultivation (rototilling or hoeing) will effectively eliminate plants.
- ~ Reduce weed infestation by handpulling weeds.
- ~ Mowing to prevent seed production is a very effective means of management. In lawns, mowing regularly at the proper height for the grass species may help minimize weed growth and invasion.
- ~ Careful digging is useful to manage weed populations. However, digging can carry undesirable weed seed to the surface and foster further germination.

***Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!***

#### **Chemical Management**

***IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides***

Apply according to label directions. Glyphosate products should be applied as spot treatments only!

**NOTE:** Some ingredients listed here are only available in combination. Read the label carefully on combination products to make sure the product is suitable for your specific situation.

Landscape Areas

Turf Areas

Bare Ground Areas

- glyphosate
- products containing 2,4-D

- products containing 2,4-D
- 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba

- glyphosate
- products containing 2,4-D

*Weeds: Nightshades(Solanum spp.)*

*Images*



~ Caption: Black nightshade fruit  
~ Photo by: R. Parker



~ Caption: Black nightshade flower and leaves  
~ Photo by: R. Parker



~ Caption: Black nightshade line drawing  
~ Photo by: Ciba Geigy



~ Caption: Cutleaf nightshade  
~ Photo by: R. Parker



~ Caption: *Cutleaf nightshade with fruit*  
~ Photo by: D.G. Swan



~ Caption: *Cutleaf nightshade seedling*  
~ Photo by: D.G. Swan



~ Caption: *Hairy nightshade flowers*  
~ Photo by: D.G. Swan



~ Caption: *Hairy nightshade flowers and fruit*  
~ Photo by: T.W. Miller



~ Caption: *Hairy nightshade whole plant*  
~ Photo by: T.W. Miller