



Creeping ox-eye (*Sphagneticola trilobata*)

- Scientific name & Code:** *Sphagneticola trilobata* (L.) Pruski, SPTR6
Synonyms – *Wedelia trilobata* (L.) Hitch., *Complaya trilobata* (L.) Strother, *Silphium trilobatum* L., *Thelechitonia trilobata* (L.) H. Rob. & Cuatrec.
- Family:** Asteraceae (sunflower family)
- Common names:** English – Creeping ox-eye, bay Biscayne creeping ox-eye, wedelia, Singapore daisy; Chuukese – atiat; Kosraean – rosrangrang; Marshallese – ut mokadkad, ut telia; Palauan – ngesil ra ngebard; Pohnpeian – dihpw onghng, tuhke onghng; Tongan - ate
- Origin:** Central America
- Description:** Creeping, matted, perennial herb. Stems to 1-4 dm long, rooting at the nodes. Flowering portions ascending, slightly hairy or not. Leaves fleshy, 4-9 cm long, 2-5 cm wide, irregularly toothed or serrate, usually with lateral lobes. Yellow to pale orange flowers above chaffy, rigid, lanceolate bracts about 1 cm long. Ray flowers 8-13 per head, 6-15 mm long; disk flowers numerous, 4-5 mm long with a pappus of short scales.
- Propagation:** Usually reproduces from vegetative parts. Stems and plant pieces form new plants where they touch the ground. Some mature seed development noted in some areas. Commonly spread by dumping garden waste.
- Distribution:** Tropical America. Identified in Hawaii, Rota, Saipan, and Guam.
- Habitat / Ecology:** Thrives in open areas with well-drained, moist to wet soils, but can tolerate dry periods. Grows from sea level to 700 m in elevation. Can grow in partial shade but will produce fewer blooms.
- Environmental impact:** A noxious weed in agricultural areas, roadsides, waste areas, and disturbed sites. Invasive in riparian areas, along the borders of mangroves and rainforests, and in coastal strand vegetation. Forms a dense ground cover, crowding out other species. Toxic to some farm animals, causing spontaneous abortions.
- Management:** Physical – Not effective: plant parts can root easily in soil.
Chemical – Sensitive to Dicamba, 2,4-D and Triclopyr. In Australia, a Metsulfuron methyl herbicide has been registered for the weed. Usually needs re-treatment and the removal of underground stems.
Biological – No natural enemies known at this time.

PIER Risk Assessment: High Risk, score: 13

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Photos c & d: Pacific Ecosystems at Risk (PIER): www.hear.org/Pier/index.html

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