

# Identification Guide: EIGHT COMMON BROADLEAF WEEDS



## DANDELION (*TARAXACUM OFFICINALE*)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades thin lawns and most other places. Prefers sun but otherwise tolerant of a wide range of conditions.

**Identification:** Leaves form a low rosette. Leaves are deeply lobed with the tips of the lobes pointing back toward the center of the plant. Flowers are held singly above the leaves, up to 2" wide, and have many yellow petals. Flower stalk is hollow. Seed cluster is a small puffball. Taproot allows plant to regrow but it does not naturally spread in this way. Correct mowing height and adequate fertilization will help lawn out-compete dandelions.



## WHITE CLOVER (*TRIFOLIUM REPENS*)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades lawns, especially those growing in soil low in nitrogen or over-fertilized with potassium. Tolerates low mowing but doesn't compete well with taller plants. May be purposely planted as part of a lawn mixture.

**Identification:** A short plant, about 6", with alternate leaves with three leaflets. Each leaflet may have a faint, white crescent or "v" shaped mark. White flowers are held in a rounded cluster, about 3/4" across, occurring sporadically through the summer. Spreads by stolons and by seed. Fertilization to encourage grass growth will help lawns compete against clover.



## THISTLE (*CIRSIIUM ARVENSE*)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades just about anywhere.

**Identification:** Leaves begin in a low clump early in the season, become alternate as the stem elongates and flowering begins (final height 3-5 ft). Leaves are lobed with spines on the margins. Purple flowers, mid-late summer, are held in a cluster about 1" in diameter with a swollen area below. Bull and musk thistle are also found in Indiana but their flower clusters are larger (2") and spiny and their stems are spiny. Thistle forms an immense system of underground rhizomes making control difficult. Almost impossible to remove by digging and broken rhizomes will regrow.



## CHICKWEED (*CERASTIUM FONTANUM*)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades open areas, especially in lawns. Can tolerate low mowing and most situations.

**Identification:** Mat-forming perennial with weak stems that fall over and root at nodes. Leaves are very small, less than an inch long, opposite without petioles, oblong, and very hairy. Flowers are small but conspicuous, with 5 deeply divided petals that appear as 10. Flowers on and off all summer. Spreads by forming mats and by seeds that can stay dormant but viable for several years. Hard to control culturally once established; a dense vigorous lawn can compete against this weed.



## GROUND IVY (GLECHOMA HEDERACEA)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades lawns and landscapes, prefers moist, fertile, shady sites but can tolerate full sun.

**Identification:** Leaves opposite on long petioles. Leaves kidney-shaped, almost encircling petiole, about an inch wide, edges are scalloped. Leaves have a mint scent when crushed. Purple flowers in May, but they may not be noticed. Ground ivy forms long slender stolons that root at the nodes. Plant is an aggressive spreader and difficult to control. Hand weeding is seldom completely effective.



## WILD VIOLET (VIOLA)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades moist, shady, fertile sites including lawns, which often grow poorly in shade.

**Identification:** Leaves form a rounded clump about 5" high. Leaves are heart-shaped and waxy, with long petiole, the blade often cupping toward the petiole. Flowers blue to violet to white in May, asymmetrical with five petals. Forms rhizomes and spreads. Hand digging can be effective if rhizomes are thoroughly removed.



## HENBIT (LAMIUM AMPLEXICAULE)

**Weed Type:** Annual broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades garden areas, even with mulch, and thin lawn areas.

**Identification:** Winter annuals in the mint family with square stems and opposite leaves. May germinate in fall. In spring, it grows rapidly, flowers, and dies, will be gone by mid-summer. Flowers in early spring are purple and held on upper stems. The upper leaves of henbit have no petioles, they are short and broad (kidney shaped) with scalloped edges and may appear to clasp the stem. Upper leaves of deadnettle have short petioles. The leaves are triangular with small teeth.



## BUCKHORN PLANTAIN (PLANTAGO LANCEOLATA)

**Weed Type:** Perennial broadleaf

**Problem Areas:** Invades thin lawns and bare areas. Will tolerate dry soil, compacted soil, and low mowing but not a lot of foot traffic.

**Identification:** Leaves form a rosette. Leaves are upright, long and slender with parallel veins. You may think it is a monocot but it isn't. Flowers through the summer. Flower cluster is about 1" on the end of a leafless stalk. Open flowers create ring around the cluster, opening first at the bottom of the cluster. Has a short, thick taproot. Spreads by seed.

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