

# Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) [www.goodoak.com/weeds](http://www.goodoak.com/weeds)

## Hedge Bindweed (*Convolvulus sepium*)

### DESCRIPTION:

Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) is an invasive, perennial vine, originally from Europe. Its close relative, hedge bindweed (*Convolvulus sepium*) is a native perennial vine found all across North America that can also act weedy at times. Both species are climbing, twining vines that can sprawl over other plants, but the European field bindweed tends to be much more aggressive and can cause more damage to the host plant. Both species are common on roadsides, fencerows, right-of-ways, gardens and urban waste areas with field bindweed more common in urban and agricultural areas and hedge bindweed found more often in sunny, often moist, natural areas of varying quality. Many species of bees visit these flowers for nectar and pollen, and several species of native moths rely on the vegetation as a larval food.

**-3**  
Aggressive  
Weed

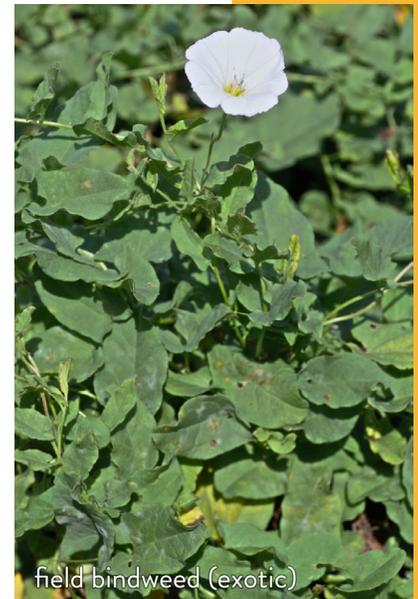
**0**  
Pesky  
Native

### IDENTIFICATION:

Hedge bindweed (the native species) has large, attractive, typically white (sometimes pink), morning glory-like tubular flowers 2-4" across. Its large (2-6" long) leaves are larger than those of field bindweed, and these leaves have a more definitive arrowhead or triangular in shape.

Field bindweed (the non-native species) has similar flowers which are smaller, always less than 2" across. The leaves are also smaller (1-3" long) and are generally arrowhead-shaped, but are more amorphous, rounded and ovular. If there is not a tall plant nearby to climb field bindweed can become a mat-forming groundcover and will even invade lawns.

A third species, low bindweed (*C. spithameus*) is rare in our area found only in high-quality prairie and savanna remnants. This species can be differentiated from the others not only by habitat but also by the fact that it is NOT typically a twining and climbing vine, but more commonly an upright forb.



field bindweed (exotic)

### CONTROL METHODS:

Typically the native hedge bindweed is not very aggressive, so we recommend only controlling this species if it is causing problems. However, the exotic field bindweed can be very aggressive and should be controlled as soon as it is discovered. If you are not sure what species you have, it is better to be safe than sorry.

**Organic:** Hand pulling is the easiest way to manage this weed, but the above ground portion often snaps off leaving the root still in the ground. The plant will resprout from the root, so you will need to pull it repeatedly. You may try digging the root out, but this can cause a lot of disturbance and is not always effective. If damage is occurring to desirable crops or native plants you may need to untwine the vine from the host plant, a tedious process. It is best to manage these species before they get out of hand.

**Chemical:** Herbicides are not recommended for controlling these species because they are invariably intertwined with other plants which may be desirable. However, after cutting or pulling the stem at the ground level, you might try applying a few drops of triclopyr (Garlon®, etc.) or glyphosate (Round-Up®, etc.) at a "cut stump" treatment concentration on the "stump" of the stem or root still remaining in the ground in order to kill the roots. Always apply herbicides according to the product label.

### NATIVE ALTERNATIVES:

Hedge bindweed itself has potential as a native landscaping plant as a vine for trellises, arbors and other structures, as morning glory has traditionally been used. Another option is hairy wild petunia (*Ruellia humilis*), a low growing native plant with purple, tubular flowers that can feed bees and hummingbirds.



hedge bindweed (native)