

Solanum diphyllum

Family: Solanaceae



Two-leaf nightshade; twin-leaf nightshade; amatillo
Synonym (Discarded Name): None
Origin: Mexico and Central America
U.S.D.A. Zone: 9a through 11
Growth Rate: Fast
Flowering Months: Late Spring through Early Fall
Leaf Persistence: Evergreen
Light Requirements: Sun to Full Shade
Drought Tolerance: High
Typical Dimensions: Height 3-6'
Propagation: Seed
Human hazards: Poisonous
Motility: listed as a Category Two Invasive by Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC)

Natural Geographic Distribution

The two-leaf nightshade, twin-leaved nightshade, *Solanum diphyllum* is a native of Mexico and Central America. Another name given to the plant is Amatillo, which is the name of a place in El Salvador, Guatemala & Honduras. Two-leaf night shade was grown in the 1960's as an ornamental plant. The two-leaf night shade was found as a "bird-dispersed" volunteer in hedges and pastures in South Florida by the late 1960's. It was noted to have "widespread escape" by 1967. It is currently naturalized in conservation areas in South and Central Florida.

Growth Habit, Morphology and Reproduction

Two-leaf nightshade is an herbaceous to woody perennial, unarmed, glabrous shrub, with the presence of two well defined leaf pairs growing from the same node with one leaf of the pair notably larger than the other. The larger leaf is entire, elliptic, widest at the center and up to 3" long; the minor leaf is entire, ovate to obovate and about 1" long. Recurved five-petaled flowers are small, many in stalked clusters, white when immature to whitish-lavender when reaching maturity. Fruit is a 1/2 inch, smooth, globular, deep yellow berry with many seeds. The plant may freeze back in winter but will resprout from its roots. Research shows that 75-85% of the seeds will sprout, and the seed can stay alive even when buried an inch in the soil for up to two years. Two-leaf nightshade is a member of the Solanaceae family. The common garden tomato also belongs to the Solanaceae family. Most parts of the two-leaf nightshade are very likely highly poisonous, including the leaves and berries.



References

Culbert, Dan. Okeechobee Extension Horticulture Agent, Featured Article, “The Weed with Two Leaves”. 2005

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Plants Profile

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