

# Cyperus difformis

## Recognize the problem

Family: Cyperaceae (sedge family).

Common names: Small-flowered nutsedge, small flower umbrella sedge/plant, smallflower flat sedge, variable flatsedge.

**Thai:** กกขนาก Kok khanak (Central); **Vietnamese:** Cỏ tò ty, cỏ cháo, cỏ lác dù;

**Burmese:** Myet-mon-hnyin-a-sein.

Erect, mostly annual sedge (10-60(-80) cm high) with smooth, triangular, slightly winged stems (0.7-3.0 mm thick); roots are numerous, fibrous and reddish in colour.

Leaves: 3-4 basal leaves, smooth, flat and linear, 5-25 cm long; sheaths are tubular and united at base, often without leaf blades at the base.

Inflorescences: Consist of several dense, umbrella-like heads, 2-6 cm long, emerging from the tip of the stem, each topped by 3-8 purplish-brown flowerheads.

Fruit: Brownish nut, elliptical to slightly obovate, about 0.6 mm long and lightly pitted.

## Background

Origin: Old World (subtropical and tropical areas).

Introduction: Introduced into uninfested crops as a contaminant in agricultural seed.

Habitat: Usually found on flooded or very wet fertile soils, open soggy grasslands and riverbanks; although highly tolerant to flooding, not tolerant to deep flooding; also found on poorer sandy or clay soils.

Spread: By seed; produces large quantities of seed throughout the year and can complete its life cycle in about 30 days; spreads along waterways.

Invades: Cultivated fields, fallow land, neglected areas, road sides, banks of irrigation canals and streams, edges of woods and sand dunes.

Impacts: The plant is a dominant weed in direct-seeded rice when it occurs in high plant densities. It forms dense mats of vegetation in the young crop and can cause rice yield losses of 12-80%. It is also a common weed in transplanted rice. The weed is a host for several pests and diseases of rice i.e. brown planthopper (*Nilaparvata lugens*), rice leaf-folder (*Marasmia patnalis*), bacterial leaf blight (*Xanthomonas campestris*) and rice sheath rot (*Sarocladium oryzae*).

*C. difformis* inflorescence. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



*C. difformis* seed. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



Scientific name(s) > *Cyperus difformis*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



Authors: CABI. Edited by participants from Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam at a workshop in Thailand, March 2016  
CABI  
tel: +60 (0)3 894329321 email: cabisea@cabi.org

Edited by Plantwise.