

'I HAD NO IDEA THE INCREDIBLE MENACE THIS WEED REALLY IS'

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A tough new weed is quickly becoming established around Houston. It grows in full sun, shade, thick clay, gravel, sand or with epiphytic ferns and orchids. Already known in Mississippi, Florida and South Carolina, it is quickly spreading through shared potted or purchased plants.



I likely smiled at first seeing this cute little plant when it showed up in my garden. I had no idea the incredible menace this weed really is.



It is self-fertile with a large seed capsule that develops on very small plants, about 4" in my experience. However, the root develops into a long tuber that is brittle making it nearly impossible to pull. Leaves are lanceolate to ovate in shape, 3" long and up to 1" wide. I have removed roots (tuber)

from a pot of gravel that was around 20" long.



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Native to east Australia, *Pseuderanthemum* sp. variable goes by many common names: Pastel flower, Love flower, Night and Afternoon, etc. Sometimes labeled a Gesneriad, it is properly categorized as Acanthaceae. As it is resistant to most weed killers, the best route is to remove every bit by repotting plants or bulbs or remounting epiphytic plants. Persistence may meet with success or control, but it is nearly impossible to kill once it becomes established. Unfortunately, some people are intentionally growing it and it does not appear to have been killed by our 14° F temps in February.