

Commelinaceae
Commelina diffusa
Wandering Jew



M Fox



ALA Local Natives

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Field Botanist



M Fox



ETYMOLOGY

(com-el-EEN-a) After Jan & Caspar Commelin 17th-century Dutch Botanists; The species diffusa (dif-FEW-sah) spread out, wide; loosely spreading; Creeper 15 cm

LIFEFORM

STATUS

OCCURS

Well conserved; Common; **Old name** *Commelina cyanea* (NSW have kept this name) Agnes water Q, NSW, Arnhem Land NT (PI, Mal, Mel, NG, West Indies, Mexico, America, Tropical Africa, Asia, Taiwan, Japan, Malaysia)

HABITAT

Disturbed Damp Wet Areas;

TOLERANCE

Coastal saltwater inundation, grows in heavy shade (plant at 50cm intervals)

LEAVES

Alternate, 6-10 x 1.5 cm, broadly lanceolate, soft, parallel veined, crisp watery folded wavy margins arising from a closed sheath at base;

FLOWERS

Petals, 1.5 cm, 3 on slender 3 cm stipes solitary spathes, fragile bright blue with yellow anthers a few arising from a folded green spathe; Flowers last only 1 day; **Flowering Times:** Jan, Feb, March (After rain event)

FRUIT

Capsules, 5 mm, globular, cylindrical containing 5 seeds 2 mm brown to black;

STEM

Loose trailer with soft weak jointed stems creep along the ground, but often produce short upright branches;

ETHNOBOTANY

Useful groundcover in heavy shade; Young shoot cooked as a vegetable, juice used to heal wounds, to treat inflamed eyes as a digestive aid, treatment for asthma, decoction of stem & leaves boiled in water is esteemed tonic for debility general weakness or illness; Food for wallabies, rabbits good chock food; Alleviation of back and chest pains used as diuretic; contains anthocyanins;

BEEES

Blue Banded Bee *Amegilla* sp.

INSECTS

Cretonotus gangis (Baphomet Moth) *Rhynchina obliquarlis*, *Elachistidae* sp (Grass-miner Moths)

ID FEATURE

Roots creamy white + Leaves hairless + Flowers blue, flower-base 2 sides folded together lengthwise.