

Commelina diffusa

Spreading dayflower, honohono

Commelina diffusa N.L. Burm.

Family: Commelinaceae

Description: Succulent creeping herb to 15 ft long, roots at nodes. Leaves 4 inches long by 1 inch wide, sheath 0.8 inches long. Flowers with 3 petals, blue. Five seeds, seed surface with raised net-like pattern. Genus named by Linnaeus after Dutchmen Jan Commelijn, his nephew Caspar Commelijn, 17th century botanists, and a third Commeljin who died young. They are represented by the three petals, two large ones and one small⁽⁵⁹⁾. Greek: *diffusa*, spreading, for growth habit⁽⁵⁾. [Also in Hawai'i is *C. benghalensis* L., hairy honohono or tropical spiderwort, similar in appearance but with broader leaves and pale blue flowers. First collected on O'ahu in 1909⁽⁷⁰⁾. *Benghalensis*, of Bengal, India⁽⁶⁹⁾].

Distribution: From Old World tropics. Common throughout the world. In Hawai'i, occurs in moist to wet pastures and forests on all the main islands except Ni'ihau. First collected in Hawai'i in 1837⁽⁷⁰⁾.



Environmental impact: Forms carpet in wet pastures and natural areas, displacing grasses in pastures and native plants in humid forests and wetlands. Not relished by cattle, but they will graze it. Trampling also controls honohono.

Management: Sensitive to hormone type herbicides. HAVO staff controlled honohono with foliar applications of triclopyr ester at 1%.