

A Conservation Plant Released by the Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 E. “Kika” de la Garza Plant Materials Center, Kingsville, Texas and  
 Texas Native Seeds, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute,  
 Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas

# Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed

*Polanisia dodecandra* (L.) DC. ssp.  
*riograndensis*

Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed [*Polanisia dodecandra* (L.) DC. ssp. *riograndensis*] was cooperatively released in 2009 by the Texas Native Seeds Program of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the USDA NRCS E. “Kika” de la Garza Plant Materials Center. This release is a selected plant material class of certified seed.

### Description

Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed is a native, annual forb endemic to southern Texas. It has a mature foliage height ranging from 8 to 24 inches and produces pink flowers from March through November (Fig. 1).

### Source

This selection is a composite of two collections from Dimmitt and Zapata County, Texas. These two accessions were chosen from 6 accessions of clammyweed evaluated at two locations within MLRA 83 (Rio Grande Plain).

### Conservation Uses

Rio Grande clammyweed is recommended for pollinator plantings, upland wildlife plantings, as a cover crop, and in range seeding mixes. Clammyweed seed is eaten by game birds such as northern bobwhites, scaled quail, mourning doves, white-wing doves, and Rio Grande wild turkeys, as well as many non-game species of birds and mammals. It is an important nectar plant for many species of butterflies and provides habitat to many other insects. Clammyweed has no grazing value for livestock or wildlife. Rio Grande clammyweed is an early successional plant. As a component of a seed mix of native species, Rio Grande clammyweed is one of the first plants to germinate, establish and produce seed. Clammyweed is an excellent nurse plant for many slow growing, native perennial grasses.

### Area of Adaptation and Use

Rio Grande clammyweed is naturally found in sandy, gravelly or alluvial silty soils on both sides of the lower Rio Grande River and adjacent areas of south Texas. Zapata Germplasm performs best in MLRA 83 (Rio Grande Plain) and MLRA 150B (Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes).

### Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

Before planting, establish a clean, weed-free seedbed by either tillage or non-residual herbicides. Prior to seeding, the site should be firm and have accumulated soil moisture. Plant in early spring or late summer-early fall, with consideration for seed production and maturity before the onset of freezing temperatures. Rio Grande clammyweed typically requires 45-60 days from planting for seed to mature under ideal growing conditions. Zapata Germplasm can be seeded using a seed drill or broadcasted in areas not easily planted with a drill. If broadcast seeded, use additional practices such as culti-packing or light dragging to ensure good seed-to-soil contact. Plant seed 1/8 to 1/4 inch deep. It is better to plant too shallow than too deep.

For calibration purposes, Zapata Germplasm contains approximately 154,000 seeds per bulk pound. A seeding rate of 8 pounds pure live seed (PLS) per acre is recommended. In seed mixes, reduce the rate according to the percent of Rio Grande

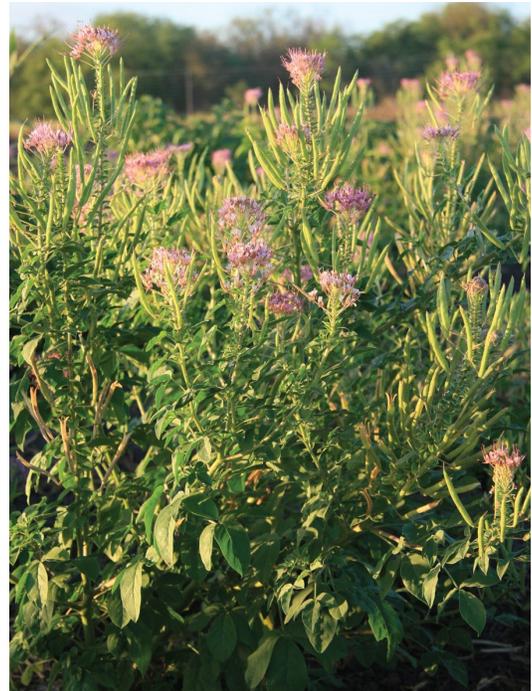


Figure 1. Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed plant

clammyweed desired on the planting site. Clammyweed tends to decline at a site unless allowed to reseed itself, accompanied with moderate soil disturbance, prior to the growing season.

### **Ecological Considerations**

White flies can cause severe defoliation of clammyweed, but typically will not kill the plant. Zapata Germplasm is a composite of naturally occurring germplasm and has undergone no breeding, selection or genetic manipulation.

### **Seed and Plant Production**

Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed is direct seeded using a row crop planter or grain drill for seed production. Rio Grande clammyweed can be harvested with a combine. Zapata Germplasm averages 100-200 bulk lb/acre and can be harvested twice annually in South Texas. After drying, use an air screen cleaner or gravity table to clean the seed.

### **Availability**

*For conservation use:*

Seed is available from native seed dealers in south Texas. Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed is identified by USDA NRCS accession number 9093442.

*For seed or plant increase:*

All commercial seed fields of Zapata Germplasm must be located in Texas and isolated from other cultivated varieties and wild populations of *Polanisia dodecandra* by a minimum of a half mile. Release of this variety will be limited to a single grower, with preference given to those who can provide production locations meeting isolation requirements.

G0 seed of Zapata Germplasm Rio Grande clammyweed is a composite of two individual accessions, grown in isolation from one another, and maintained by Texas Native Seeds. G1 seed is harvested by isolated plantings of G0 seed and G2 seed is harvested from plantings G1 seed. Increasing Generation 2 seed is prohibited. Generation 0 seed will consist of equal amounts (by percent PLS, +/-10%) of each accession. G1 and G2 seed fields have a 7-year production limit, after which time, fields must be replanted using the appropriate seed generation (G0 or G1).

### **Citation**

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