

Botanic name : *Lippia geminata* Kunth -- Nov. Gen. Sp. [H.B.K.] 2: 266. 1818 (IK)

[Syn: *Lippia alba* (Mill.) N.E.Br. ex Britton & P.Wilson]

Common name : Bushy matgrass

Family : Verbenaceae

Habitat : Terrestrial

Distribution : Through tropical and subtropical America, and the Caribbean, Indian subcontinent, from Argentina to southern N. America. Widespread invasive in degraded forest land, slopes, mining area, inhibiting growth of native flora and some crop plants

Description : Aromatic, erect, sparsely branched shrub growing up to 2 m; stem branched, hairy; leaves simple, fragrant, decussate-opposite or ternate, deciduous, serrate at margin; inflorescence spicate or capitate, solitary or fascicled in leaf axils; flowers small, sessile, borne singly in the axils of bracts, often more or less 4-ranked; calyx persistent, membranous, gamosepalous, ovoid-campanulate; corolla connate, hypocrateriform or infundibular, 4-lobed, zygomorphic; tube cylindric, straight, slightly exerted from calyx; lobes oblique, spreading, somewhat 2-lipped, the anterior lip larger than the posterior; stamens 4, didynamous, inserted at about the middle of the corolla-tube (epipetalous); anthers ovate, unappendaged, the cells parallel; ovary 2-locular, with 1 ovule/locule in axile placentation; style often short with oblique or sublateral stigma; fruit dry, ovoid, surrounded by the fruiting-calyx and sometimes partially adnate to it, dividing into 2 mericarps or "nutlets" at maturity; pericarp papery or hard; seeds exalbuminous

Phytochemicals: Essential oil-dihydrocarvone, mono- and sesquiterpenes. Other compounds include limonene, pinene, linalol, and camphor

Medicinal/Economic uses : Antifungal, insecticidal, and repellent. promising for use in the pharmaceutical, aromatic, and perfumery industries and may also be suitable for the agricultural chemical industry. Limonene is used as a solvent in cleaning products, foodstuffs, and the cosmetics industry while carvone is used as a carminative and in cosmetic products and has bactericidal and fungicidal properties. Used for curing from intestinal and respiratory disturbances, including influenza (leaf tea), fevers and severe stomach pain, and to cleanse the bladder (herbal bath with leaves), heart problems and to soothe tachycardia (plant infusion). In traditional Brazilian medicine, this species is popularly known as lemon balm. Economic- flavouring in soup, tea, and as a cooked vegetable

