

## Plant Sniffs Out Prey

The dodder is a very unusual plant and is known as one of the ten worst weeds found in the United States. A newly sprouted dodder seed does not bother to grow roots. Rather, it sprouts a tendril that grows out, looking for other plants. It has, at most, a week to find a plant from which to steal water and nutrients.

The dodder is a parasite, and while it does not kill its victims, it will take enough water and nutrition to stunt their growth. The dodder actually costs California tomato growers \$4,000,000 a year in losses. Researchers found that the species of dodder that causes most trouble to tomato plants actually “sniffs out” its victims. Scientists knew that plants emit pheromones or scents unique to each species. The researchers gave a sprouting dodder seed a choice of targets to grow toward, including a tomato plant. When the dodder seed sprouted, it immediately sent a tendril out to the tomato. In a more rigorous test, researchers connected possible targets in separate enclosures to the sprouting dodder with curved tubes. The dodder still found the tomato plant.

The dodder has no nervous system, and scientists marvel at what it can do. Rather, they should be marveling at what our Creator can do in providing for the needs of all living things.

### **Psalm 104:14**

**“He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth...”**

Prayer: Father, I thank You for supplying our daily bread as well as our eternal salvation. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

*Ref: Science News, S. Milius, “Scent Stalking.”*