

WEED WATCH

Tansy Ragwort



Weed Watch is part of the district's effort to raise awareness about noxious weeds and their impact on natural resources and the local economy. For more information about tansy ragwort and other invasive weeds visit www.yamhillswcd.org/weeds.

Description

Tansy ragwort is a biennial (sometimes annual or perennial) herbaceous plant. As a biennial, tansy ragwort spends the first year as a rosette with ruffled dark green basal leaves. During the second year, one or two stems form and produce clusters of daisy-like yellow flowers with 13 petals.

Tansy ragwort can form dense patches, particularly on disturbed sites. This noxious weed is dangerous to humans and livestock due to a poisonous alkaloid (hepatotoxic pyrrolizidine) in its tissue which causes liver damage when ingested.

Manual Controls

Tansy ragwort can be effectively controlled by chemical and manual methods. It is an important plant to control, especially in hay and pasture lands, where it can harm grazing animals. As with any control method it is important to avoid disturbing the soil as much as possible. Soil disturbance can bring buried seeds to the surface, and lead to increased soil erosion. Due to the toxicity of Tansy ragwort, be sure to wear gloves and protective clothing when removing tansy.

Tansy ragwort can be controlled by digging and pulling. Plants should be pulled between May and June, after they bolt and before they flower. Pulling and digging are easier when soil is moist. Rosettes should be dug up, removing as much as the root as possible. Grubbing tools, hoes, and shovels can be used.

Mechanical Controls

Mowing is not a suggested means of control for tansy ragwort. While mowing may prevent the plant from immediately producing seeds, it also stimulates additional vegetative growth. This leads to more plants and more stems per plant in the same season. Mowing is especially problematic in pastures, where it can spread the toxic leaves making it harder for grazing animals to avoid.

Cultural

Grazing of Tansy ragwort is generally discouraged. For most grazing animals, the plant is highly toxic. Sheep are known to tolerate the alkaloids, but Tansy ragwort is not considered desirable forage. The impacts of grazing on Tansy ragwort is similar to mowing, and may help to suppress the plant, but is not an effective control method.

Chemical

Herbicide application is an effective means to control tansy ragwort infestations. Tansy ragwort is susceptible to several systemic herbicides. When applying herbicides remember to always follow label instructions. Use caution to avoid and prevent off-target drift and be aware of restrictions regarding livestock grazing. You can find more information regarding herbicide products at <http://pnwhandbooks.org/weed/>.

Contact Information

Yamhill Soil & Water Conservation District

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