



ISLAND COUNTY NOXIOUS WEED PROGRAM WEED ALERT

Senecio jacobaea

Tansy Ragwort

Sunflower Family

Class B Regulated Noxious Weed: Control Required

Identification Tips

Young plants have basal rosette of ruffled leaves
Mature plants produce leafy flowering stalks,
generally 2 to 4 feet tall
Flowers are daisy-like with yellow petals and
yellow center
Leaves are dark green on top, whitish-green
underneath, with deeply cut, blunt-toothed lobes
with a ragged, ruffled appearance
Often confused with common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), which has button-like flowers with no
petals and flattened, fern-like leaves (See back)



Young tansy ragwort plants have basal rosette of ruffled leaves.

Biology

Generally biennial, with flowers in the second year
Up to 150,000 seeds per plant; seeds spread by
wind or mowing
Seeds remain viable in the soil for over 10 years
Flowers June to October, forming seeds in August



Tell-tale signs: leafy, flowering stalks,
generally 2-4 feet tall.

Impacts

Poisonous to cattle, horses, sheep, pets and people;
symptoms include swelling, inflammation of
membranes, diarrhea, blood in feces, rough coat
and excessive fluid in body
Displaces quality forage plants due to its highly
aggressive growth
Liver damage possible due to bioaccumulation

Distribution

Found county-wide
Likes full sun and open sites with moderately
moist to dry soils
Quickly invades newly disturbed areas, such as
roadsides and heavily-grazed pastures

Questions:

Call Island County Noxious Weed
Control Board 360-678-7992
<http://ext100.wsu.edu/island/nrs/noxious/>

What You Can Do

Help us stop the spread of this dangerous weed. Check your property and nearby roads regularly for flowering plants. By stopping seed production and eliminating existing plants, we can keep this toxic plant from harming animals. Contact the Noxious Weed Control Program if you see tansy ragwort on roads or neighboring properties, especially where there are horses or other animals grazing.

Control Methods

If you find tansy ragwort on your property, choose one or a combination the control methods described below.

Most control methods need to be applied over several years to be successful.

Prevention: Watch for weeds in fill dirt, hay and seed from outside your area; clean vehicles and equipment regularly. Check for rosettes (young plants) in the spring.

Manual: Dig up the whole plant including roots; budding and flowering stems are easier to remove than rosettes. Flowers will go to seed after pulling, so bag and discard flower stalks.



Daisy-like flowers are found on tansy ragwort.

Mechanical: Tillage may be effective for large areas but may initially expose more seeds for germination. Mowing can stimulate crown growth and side roots. **Caution: plants will flower again after mowing.**

Cultural: Good pasture management keeps out unwanted plants. Re-seeding areas with fast-growing pasture grasses can establish competition and reduce tansy ragwort seed emergence.

Chemical: Herbicide treatments may help control large infestations. **Follow label application directions including grazing and environmental restrictions.** Good control is obtained by spraying rosettes in the spring and again in the fall with products that are systemic and selective so that they will not harm grasses. Selective herbicides that are effective include dicamba, 2,4-D and triclopyr. Glyphosate is non-selective but can be used where weeds are dense or where damage to grasses is minimal or will be re-seeded. Follow all regulations when applying herbicides near sensitive areas and their buffers. In some cases, this will require a permit or special license. Do not cut plants right before or after application in order to allow the systemic herbicide to take effect. Keep livestock away from sprayed plants for 1-2 weeks or as directed by the label, whichever is longer. Contact the Island County Noxious Weed Control Program for specific site and herbicide recommendations.



Common tansy is often mistaken for tansy ragwort, especially along roadsides.

Button-like flowers of the common tansy.



Don't be Fooled: Tansy ragwort is sometimes confused with common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*). Common tansy is a widespread noxious weed that often grows with tansy ragwort. Unlike tansy ragwort, livestock avoid this strong-smelling plant. Common tansy is easily identified by yellow, button-like flower heads without petals. Control is not required for common tansy, but it is recommended.