

Mason County Noxious Weed Alert

Sunflower Family

Tansy Ragwort

Jacobaea vulgaris

Identification Tips

- First year is spent in rosette stage.
- Leaves are alternately arranged, dark green in color and deeply lobed.
- Stem is 2-4 feet tall, highly branched near top. Mainly green in color with a purple tint.
- Plant has deep taproot.
- Flowers have 13 petals (ray flowers) surrounding a yellow-orange center (disk flowers).
- Flowers grow in clusters at end of stem.



Regulated Class B Noxious Weed: Control Required

Biology

- Biennial or short lived perennial, typically flowering during second year.
- Flowers from June to October, starts forming seed in August.
- Reproduces primarily by seed, producing up to 200,000 seeds per plant.
- Seeds can remain viable in the soil for over 10 years.



Tansy ragwort will remain in the rosette stage for its first year. Learn to identify rosettes for earliest possible detection and control.

Impacts

- Plant is **toxic** to livestock and people, causing irreversible liver damage.
- Outcompetes and displaces desired forage crops and native vegetation.
- Reduces pasture yield.
- Potentially toxic to humans through food chain contamination.

Distribution

- Native to Eurasia, tansy ragwort can now be found throughout Washington State.
- Typically grows in full sun to partial shade.
- Infests pastures, grasslands and disturbed areas such as roadsides and clear-cuts.
- Common in disturbed, overgrazed or poorly managed pastures.

QUESTIONS? Contact Mason County Noxious Weed Control at:

(360) 427-9670 ext. 592 or patriciag@co.mason.wa.us

<https://extension.wsu.edu/mason/natural-resources/noxious-weed-program/>

What You Can Do

Control of tansy ragwort is a legal requirement in Mason County. Help us stop the spread of this noxious 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 Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board if you see tansy ragwort on roads or neighboring properties.

Control Methods

Survey area to identify infestations. Tansy ragwort is easiest to identify while it is in bloom. Choose one or a combination of control methods suitable for your site. Control should be carried out over several growing seasons to be successful. **Contact Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board for more information.**

Prevention

Look for seeds and weeds in fill dirt and hay. Survey yours, and neighboring properties for tansy rosettes in the spring. Reseed bare areas in yard and pasture to add competition. To prevent the spread of tansy ragwort always clean equipment and clothes that have been used in an infested area.

Manual Control

Hand pulling can work to control small infestations of tansy ragwort. The best time to pull plants is after they bolt, but before flowering. **Due to the toxicity you will need gloves and protective clothing while handling plant material.** Dispose of plants in a sealed plastic bag, as plants can produce viable seed even after they are pulled. Take care to not break the taproot, as roots can re-sprout and grow into new plants. Monitor location for several years and perform follow-up control when needed. Reseed and replant area to add competition and reduce future infestations.



Field of tansy ragwort going to seed. This property owner thought they had beautiful wildflowers. Don't be fooled by tansy ragwort!

Can be confused with Class C Noxious Weeds St. Johnswort and common tansy



Common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) has button-like flowers and lacks ray flowers or "petals". Leaves are deeply toothed and look similar to a fern.



Common St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*) has five petals surrounding many stamens. Leaves have distinct perforations (holes) when held up to the light.

Mechanical

Mowing is not an effective method of controlling tansy ragwort. It will delay blooming, but plants will resprout and flower again. **Mowed plants can continue as short-lived perennials until given the opportunity to bloom and produce seed.**

Chemical

Choose a formulation that is appropriate for your site, consider if you have site restrictions (such as grazing or haying). Follow the label exactly as written and use only at rate prescribed. Do not apply herbicide over or near water bodies.

Herbicide treatments can be effective at controlling large infestations of tansy ragwort. A selective herbicide, containing triclopyr or aminopyralid, will be effective against tansy ragwort. Selective herbicides will only affect broadleaf plants and will not injure grasses. Treatments using herbicide should be carried out in the spring and fall, and work best on plants in rosette stage. Keep livestock away from sprayed plants for 1-2 weeks or as directed by label, whichever is longer. Do not cut plants right before or after applying herbicide; adequate leaf surface area is needed for herbicide uptake. Follow-up with manual control on isolated patches.

Contact the Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board with questions about herbicide application.

