

European Hawkweed

Hieracium sabaudum

Sunflower Family

Class A Noxious Weed: Eradication Required

Identification Tips

- Herbaceous perennial up to 4 feet tall with multiple stems from a single root base
- Numerous small yellow flower heads arranged in a loose, flat-topped cluster (candelabra-shape)
- Lacks stolons
- Leaf edges toothed, tapered and narrow at base
- About 50 stem leaves, crowded and larger at the base and smaller and fewer upwards
- Lower portion of stem covered with dense, long white hairs
- A milky juice appears when stem is broken

Biology

- Spreads by seeds only and can produce them without pollination
- Flowers in late July to October
- Has fibrous root system
- Does well in low nutrient, rocky soils

Impacts

- Invades pastures, rangeland and grasslands, reducing forage value of these lands for grazing
- Displaces native plants due its aggressive growth

Distribution

- Currently limited distribution in King County
- Has been identified on I-90, SR-522, SR-2, SR-202 and the Iron Horse Trail at Twin Falls Power Station
- Like other hawkweeds, this weed does well in disturbed soils and can quickly invade roadsides, forest openings, fields and pastures
- Prefers full sun but can tolerate some shade

Questions?

King County Noxious Weed Control
Program Line: 206-296-0290
www.kingcounty.gov/weeds



Look for small yellow flowers growing on many branches.



Leaves are numerous at base of plant.



Lower stems have white hairs.



European hawkweeds will quickly invade roadsides, fields and pastures.



What You Can Do

The King County Noxious Weed Control Program is actively trying to eradicate European hawkweed. Do your part by removing this weed from your property and washing vehicles, boots and animals that have been in infested areas. If you find it growing on public lands, please report the location to our 24-hour program information line at 206-296-0290 or online at www.kingcounty.gov/weeds

Control Methods

The preferred method of control is one that incorporates a multifaceted and adaptive approach. Control methods need to be applied over several years to be successful.

Prevention: Early detection and removal is the best way to control hawkweeds. Clean equipment, especially mowers, after using in infested areas.

Manual: Small infestations can be removed by thorough digging with a small shovel or trowel; however, sometimes soil disturbance encourages the growth of new plants. Dig up plants in the spring or early summer when the soil is still moist and before the seeds mature.

This variety of hawkweed reproduces through seed production only. It does not reproduce vegetatively via stolons or rhizomes so cutting and pulling are effective if done with frequency and diligence. If the plant is in flower, cut off the flower head, bag and dispose of it into the regular trash. Hawkweeds can form viable seeds after they are cut or dug up. **Mowing is not recommended. Mowed plants respond by quickly flowering again.**

Mechanical: Regular tillage will help control hawkweeds on agricultural lands.

Chemical: Follow labels exactly as written and only use products appropriate and legal for the site. Glyphosate (such as Roundup) is effective but is a non-selective herbicide that will also kill grasses in the area being sprayed. When using a non-selective herbicide, you must re-seed with desirable vegetation. Bare areas will re-infest from existing seed bank and any missed hawkweed plants. Triclopyr (such as Brush B Gone) is a selective herbicide that targets only broadleaf plants so it may be used in grassy areas. Treatment is most effective in the spring, early summer, and fall. Apply the herbicide to entire leaf and stem surface of actively growing plants. Additional products may be available for controlling hawkweeds on pastures, landscapes, roadsides and other non-crop sites. For more information, please contact the King County Noxious Weed Control Program.

Revised October 2008



European hawkweeds reproduce by seed only; control plants before they go to seed as pictured above.