

In cooperation with the Summit County Noxious Weed Department, the Town of Silverthorne presents a short presentation with pictures and descriptions of noxious weeds that could be in your yard and need to be controlled by state mandate. This program provides a picture of each species and explains why they are harmful. For more information on how to control these weeds on your

property, contact the

Summit County Weed Coordinator

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- What is a noxious weed?
- Canada Thistle
- Dalmation Toadflax
- Diffuse Knapweed
- Hoary Cress
- Houndstongue
- Leafy Spurge
- Musk Thistle
- Perennial Pepperweed
- Plumeless Thistle
- Russian Knapweed
- Scentless Chamomile
- Spotted Knapweed
- Yellow Toadflax
- Oxeye Daisy
- Common Tansy
- Dames Rocket
- Summit County Contacts



What is a Noxious Weed?



Noxious weeds are non-native plant species that have been introduced into an environment with few, if any, natural biological controls, thus giving them a distinct competitive advantage in dominating and crowding out native plant species.

Canada Thistle



- **Canada Thistle** *Cirsium arvense* (L.) Scop.
- Canada thistle is a member of the Aster or Sunflower family. Canada thistle was introduced from Europe. It is a creeping perennial which reproduces by seeds and fleshy, horizontal roots. The erect stem is hollow, smooth and slightly hairy, 1 to 5 feet tall, simple, and branched at the top.
- The leaves are set close on the stem, slightly clasping, and dark green. Leaf shape varies widely from oblong to lance-shaped. Sharp spines are numerous on the outer edges of the leaves and on the branches and main stem of the plant. The flowers are small and compact; about 3/4-inch or less in diameter, and light pink to rose-purple in color. The seeds are oblong, flattened, dark brown, and approximately 1/8-inch long.
- Canada thistle emerges in April or May in most parts of Colorado. It is one of the most widespread, and economically damaging noxious weeds in Colorado. Infestations are found in cultivated fields, riparian areas, pasture, rangeland, forests, lawns and gardens, roadsides, and in waste areas, Because of its seeding habits, vigorous growth, and extensive underground root system, control or eradication is difficult. It is distributed across Colorado from 4,000 to 9,500 feet.

Dalmation Toadflax



- **Dalmatian Toadflax** *Linarian genistifolia ssp. dal;natica* (L.) Maire & Petitmengin
- Dalmatian toadflax is a member of the Figwort family. It was introduced as an ornamental from Europe, and is now rapidly invading dry rangeland from 5,000 to 8,000 feet. It is a creeping perennial that closely resembles yellow toadflax. The leaves are waxy, heart-shaped, and clasp the stem. The stems are from 2 to 4 feet tall. The flowers are snapdragon-shaped, bright yellow, with orange centers.
- Dalmatian toadflax is especially well adapted to arid sites and can spread rapidly once established. Because of its deep, extensive root system, waxy leaf, and heavy seed production, this plant is difficult to manage.

Hoary Cress



- **Hoary Cress (Whitetop)** *Cardaria draba*
- (L.) Desv.
- Hoary cress, a member of the Mustard family, was probably introduced from Europe in alfalfa seed. It is a creeping perennial which reproduces by seed and creeping roots. The extensive root system spreads horizontally and vertically with frequent shoots arising from the root stock. It grows erect from 10 to 18 inches high and has a gray-white color.
- The alternate leaves clasp the stem and are oval or oblong with toothed or almost smooth margins. The leaves are often covered with very fine white hairs. Each leaf is 1/2 to 2 inches long with blunt ends. The flowers are white, 1/8 inch across, and numerous in compact flattop clusters which give the plant its name. Each heart-shaped seed pod contains two oval, finely pitted, red-brown seeds each about 1/12 inch long.
- Hoary cress is one of the earliest perennial weeds to emerge in the spring. Flowers are produced in late April and May. It grows in waste places, cultivated fields, and pastures, and is capable of vigorous growth on the irrigated, alkaline soils of the West. It is a major problem in certain pastures and cultivated areas in Colorado from 3,500 to 8,500 feet.

Diffuse Knapweed



- **Diffuse Knapweed** *Ceithaurea diftitsa* Lam.
- Diffuse knapweed is a member of the Aster family, Thistle tribe. Diffuse knapweed was introduced from Europe and is a biennial or short-lived perennial forb which reproduces only by seed. The plant usually produces a single much-branched stem that is 1-1/2 to 2 feet tall. A basal rosette of leaves is present in young plants with each leaf divided into narrow segments.
- When leaves are young a thin nap is present. Stem leaves in the mature plant become much reduced as you ascend to the tip and alternate one per node. Flowers are mostly white, sometimes purple, and are located on each branch tip. The bracts surrounding each flower bear 4 to 5 pairs of lateral spines and one, long terminal spine.
- Diffuse knapweed can be found in pastures, riparian areas, roadsides, and waste areas in Colorado. It is a tough competitor on dry sites and rapidly invades and dominates disturbed areas. It is widespread and increasing in the state, particularly along the Front Range.

Houndstongue



- **Houndstongue** *Cynoglossum officinale* L.
- Houndstongue is a member of the Borage family. It is a biennial introduced from Europe. It reproduces by seeds and appears as a leafy rosette in its first year. The stem is erect, stout, heavy, 1-1/2 to 3 feet high, usually branched above. The leaves are alternate, the basal and lower ones are broad, and are oblong to lance-shaped.
- The upper leaves are narrower and pointed, almost clasping. The flowers are terminal and reddish-purple in color. The fruit consists of four nutlets (seeds), each about 1/3 inch long, with the outer surface covered with short, barbed prickles. Nutlets break apart at maturity and are rapidly scattered by animals.
- Houndstongue grows in ranges, pastures, and roadsides. Houndstongue is toxic to horses and cattle. The weed contains alkaloids that may cause liver cells to stop reproducing.

Leafy Spurge



- **Leafy Spurge** *Euphorbia esula* L.
- Leafy spurge, a member of the Spurge family, was introduced from Europe. It is a creeping perennial which reproduces by seed and extensive creeping roots. The roots can extend as deep as 30 feet and are extremely wide-spreading. The shoots grow erect, 1 to 3 feet high, are pale green and unbranched except for flower clusters.
- Leaves are alternate, narrowly linear with smooth margins, about 1/4 inch wide, and 1 to 4 inches long. The small yellow-green flowers are enclosed by a pair of yellowish-green, heart-shaped bracts. The bracts have the appearance of flowers. The pods are three-seeded. The plant, including the root, has a milky latex that is damaging to eyes and sensitive skin.
- Leafy spurge is an extremely difficult plant to control because of its extensive sprouting root system and is one of the most serious noxious weed threats in Colorado.
- It is adapted to a wide variety of habitats in the state and is very competitive with other plant species. If it becomes established in rangeland, pasture, and riparian sites, it may exclude all other vegetation due to its competitive nature. Although it is unpalatable to cattle, sheep and goats eat spurge, do well on it, and are useful biocontrol tools.

Musk Thistle



- **Musk Thistle** *Carduus nutans* L.
- Musk thistle is a member of the Aster family, Thistle tribe. It is an introduced biennial, winter annual, or rarely annual which reproduces by seed. The first year's growth is a large, compact rosette from a large, fleshy, corky taproot. The second year stem is erect, spiny, 2 to 6 feet tall and branched at the top.
- The leaves are alternate, deeply cut or lobed with five points per lobe, very spiny, 3 to 6 inches long and extend (clasp) down the stem. The waxy leaves are dark green with a light green midrib and mostly white margins. The large and showy flowers are terminal, flat, nodding, 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 inches broad, purple, rarely white, and surrounded by numerous, lance-shaped, spine-tipped bracts. Blooms appear in late May and June and set seed in June or July. Seeds are straw-colored and oblong.
- Musk thistle is commonly found in pastures, roadsides, and waste places. It prefers moist, bottom land soil, but can be found on drier uplands, also. It is becoming an increasing problem throughout Colorado.

Perennial Pepperweed



- **Perennial Pepperweed** *Lepidium latifolium* L.
- Perennial pepperweed or tall whitetop is a member of the Mustard family. It was introduced from either southern Europe or western Asia. It is a deep-rooted perennial plant with an extensive, vigorous creeping root system which reproduces by seed and root stalks. Perennial pepperweed is similar to whitetop, however, it is much taller. Perennial pepperweed stands 3 to 5 feet high with a heavy, sometimes woody, crown.
- The lower leaves are oblong with toothed margins. The upper leaves do not clasp the stem as in whitetop. Flowers are white.
- Perennial pepperweed can be found in pastures, riparian areas, roadsides, and waste places. It has a limited range in north central and south central Colorado from 5,500 to 8,000 feet. In areas where the weed grows in Colorado, such as in the San Luis Valley and along the South Platte drainage, the plant has taken over thousands of acres.

Plumeless Thistle



- **Plumeless Thistle** *Ccirduus acanthoid~'s* L.
- Plumeless thistle is a member of the Aster family, Thistle tribe. It is an introduced winter annual or biennial. This plant can be distinguished from musk thistle by its smaller flowers — 1/2 to 1 inch in diameter.
- The leaves of plumeless thistle lack the prominent white margin present on musk thistle leaves. The plant may grow to a height of 5 feet or more. Flowers are reddish-purple and are either solitary or clustered. Taproots are large and fleshy.
- Plumeless thistle is an extremely prolific seed producer. It is found in pastures, river valleys, and along roadsides. It is rapidly increasing in this state, particularly in northwestern Colorado (Pitkin, Garfield, Gunnison, and Eagle Counties).

Russian Knapweed



- **Russian Knapweed** *Centaurea repens* L.
- Russian knapweed is a member of the Aster family, Thistle tribe and is a creeping perennial introduced from Europe. It reproduces by seeds and creeping, horizontal roots. Roots, which are both vertical and horizontal in the soil, may or may not be black with a scaly appearance. The ridged stems are erect, rather stiff, branched, and one to three feet high. Young stems are covered with soft gray hairs or nap.
- The upper leaves are small and narrow with broken edges. Leaves attached midway up the stem have slightly toothed margins, while basal leaves are deeply notched. The flowers are thistle-like, solitary, terminal, 1/3 to 1/2 inch in diameter and lavender to white. The plant flowers in June to August and seed is produced in later summer to early fall.
- Russian knapweed is a serious noxious weed. It is very difficult to control or eradicate once it becomes established. It grows in cultivated fields, along ditch banks, fence rows, roadsides, and in waste places. It is distributed throughout Colorado and is especially prevalent on the Western Slope from 4,500 to 12,000 feet. It is responsible for numerous horse deaths each year in Colorado.

Scentless Chamomile



Mayweed
Chamomile



- **Scentless Chamomile** *Matricaria perforata*
- Scentless chamomile, an escaped ornamental, is a bushy annual plant, 1/2 to 2 feet tall, with showy, twelve-petaled white flowers. It is nearly identical in appearance to the strong scented species, but can be easily distinguished by its lack of odor. This member of the Sunflower family flowers from May to October. Imported from Europe as an ornamental, Scentless chamomile now grows worldwide. The plant has become established in Aspen, Breckenridge, and Vail as well as other mountainous regions in Colorado. Scentless chamomile has no forage value and can cause blistering of muzzles, irritation of mucous membranes, and skin rashes in livestock. Alternatives include Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), Cutleaf Daisy (*Erigeron compositus*) or native daisies

Spotted Knapweed



- **Spotted Knapweed** *Get ttaurect maculosa* Lam. Spotted knapweed is member of the Aster
- family, Thistle tribe. Native to central Europe, it is a simple perennial that reproduces from seed and forms a new shoot each year from a taproot. The plant can have one or more shoots up to 4 feet tall.
- Rosette leaves can be six inches long and deeply lobed. Leaves on shoots are smaller and finely divided, becoming smaller toward the top of the shoot, and are covered with fine hair.
- Flowering heads are solitary and occur on shoot tips. They are up to one inch in diameter. Flower color usually is lavender to purple. Seed head bracts are stiff and black-tipped, with five to seven pairs of short, feathery appendages. Seeds germinate in spring or fall. Perennial plants resume growth in early spring and bolt at approximately the same time as diffuse knapweed. Flowering occurs throughout the summer into fall.
- Spotted knapweed occupies dry meadows, pasture land, stony hills, roadsides, and the sandy or gravelly flood plains of streams and rivers, where soils are light-textured, well-drained, and receive summer precipitation. Spotted knapweed tolerates dry conditions, similar to diffuse knapweed, but will survive in higher moisture areas as well.

Yellow Toadflax



- **Yellow Toadflax** *Linciria vulgaris* Mill.
- Yellow toadflax, sometimes called common toadflax or butter and eggs, resembles the snapdragon in appearance and is a member of the Figwort family. It was introduced from Europe as an ornamental and has now become a serious problem to rangeland and mountain meadows. It is a perennial reproducing from seed, as well as from underground root stalk. The stems of yellow toadflax are from 8 inches to 2 feet tall and leafy.
- Leaves are pale green, alternate, narrow, and pointed at both ends. The flowers are bright yellow with deep orange centers. These flowers are about an inch long and blossom in dense clusters along the stem as it lengthens and grows. The fruit is round, about 1/4 inch in diameter, brown, and contains many seeds.
- Yellow toadflax emerges in April and May in most parts of Colorado. It is adapted to a variety of site conditions, from moist to dry and does well in all types of soils. Its displacement of desirable grasses not only reduces ecological diversity, it also reduces rangeland value and can lead to erosion problems. Because of its early vigorous growth, extensive underground root system, and effective seed dispersal methods, yellow toadflax is difficult to control.

Oxeye Daisy *



- **Oxeye Daisy** *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* L.
- Oxeye daisy, a member of the Sunflower family, is an erect perennial plant with white ray and yellow disk flowers which bloom from June through August. A native of Eurasia, this aggressive plant has escaped cultivation and become a troublesome weed in the Intermountain West. Oxeye daisy is trans-planted as an ornamental despite its tendency to crowd out more desirable vegetation. This plant is designated as a noxious weed in the states of Wyoming and Colorado. Alternatives to planting Oxeye daisy include: native daisies (*Erigeron spp*), Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), and Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia aristata*).

* Invasive Ornamental

Common Tansy *



- **Common Tansy** *Tanacetum vulgare* L.
- Common Tansy, an escaped ornamental, is a perennial plant, from 1 1/2 feet to 6 feet tall with showy button-like flowers. Originally imported from Europe as an ornamental, this member of the Sunflower family has now become widely established on the western slope of Colorado. Reproducing by both seed and rootstock, tansy is difficult to control. Tansy is particularly aggressive when growing along irrigation ditches where it can restrict water flow. It has been utilized as a medicinal herb and tea. Common tansy is sometimes mistaken for Tansy Ragwort, a poisonous plant. Alternatives to planting tansy include tall Yellow Yarrow (*Achillea fihipendula*) and Woolly Cinquefoil (*Potentilla hippiana*).

* Invasive Ornamental

Dames Rocket *



- **Dame's Rocket** *Hesperis matronalis*
- Dame's rocket is sold occasionally by local nurseries, and is found in '~wildflower' seed mixes. It is also known as Dame's violet. This persistent plant has escaped cultivation and become a problem throughout Colorado, including the Boulder foothills area and the Roaring Fork Valley of western Colorado. This native of Europe may be either a biennial or perennial, and may be from 1-1/2 to 4 feet tall, with flowers ranging in color from white to pink to purple. A member of the Mustard family, Dame's rocket flowers from April through July. Dame's rocket tends to invade riparian and wetland habitat. There are many alternatives to planting Dame's rocket, including Blue Columbine (*Aquilegia caerulea*) and Lavender Native Bee Balm (*Monarda fistulosa menthaefolia*).

* Invasive Ornamental

Summit County Contacts



Please contact the Summit County Noxious Weed Department if you have any questions.

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