
Montana's Noxious Weeds: Weed Identification

MODULE 3

Priority 2A

These weeds are common in isolated areas of Montana. Management criteria will require eradication or containment where less abundant. Management criteria shall be prioritized by local weeds districts.

Flowering rush

(*Butomus umbellatus*), perennial

Leaves:

- Triangular in cross section
- Twisted ends

Stems:

- Leafless
- Triangular in cross section

Flower:

- Purplish brown bracts
- Umbrella-shaped clusters of pink to white flowers with three petals 1" in diameter.



Eurasian watermilfoil

(*Myrophyllum spicatum*), perennial

Leaves:

- Bright green
- Whorled around stem at joints

Flower:

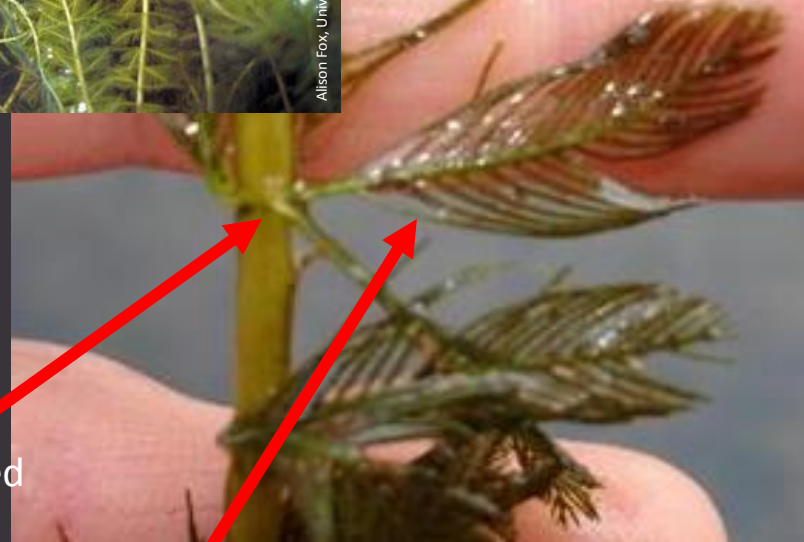
- Pink flowering spike rises above water surface



Alison Fox, University of Florida, Bugwood.org



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Leaves whorled
around stem

Pairs of leaflets
on the leaf

Graves Lovell, Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Bugwood.org

Tansy ragwort

(*Senecio jacobaea*), biennial or short-lived perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Web-like hairs
- Deeply lobed
- Produce a strong odor when crushed

Stems:

- Purplish
- Cobwebby hairs

Flower:

- Yellow
- Resemble daisies



Meadow hawkweed complex

(*Hieracium pretense*, *H. floribundum*, *H. piloselloides*), perennial

Leaves:

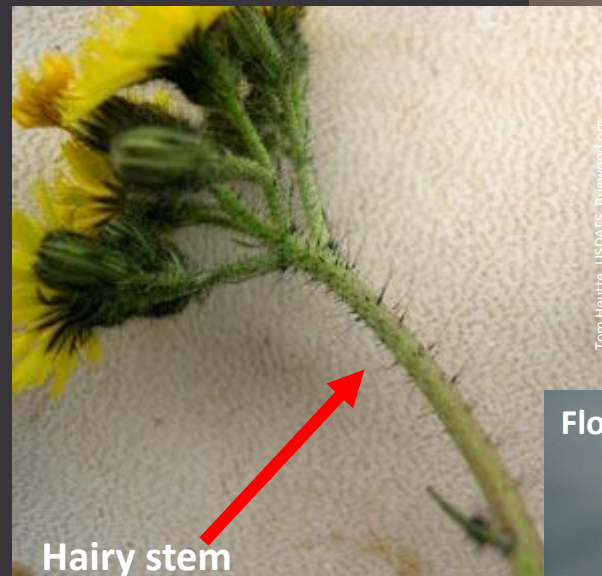
- Spatulate, mostly basal
- Dark green above and light green below

Stems:

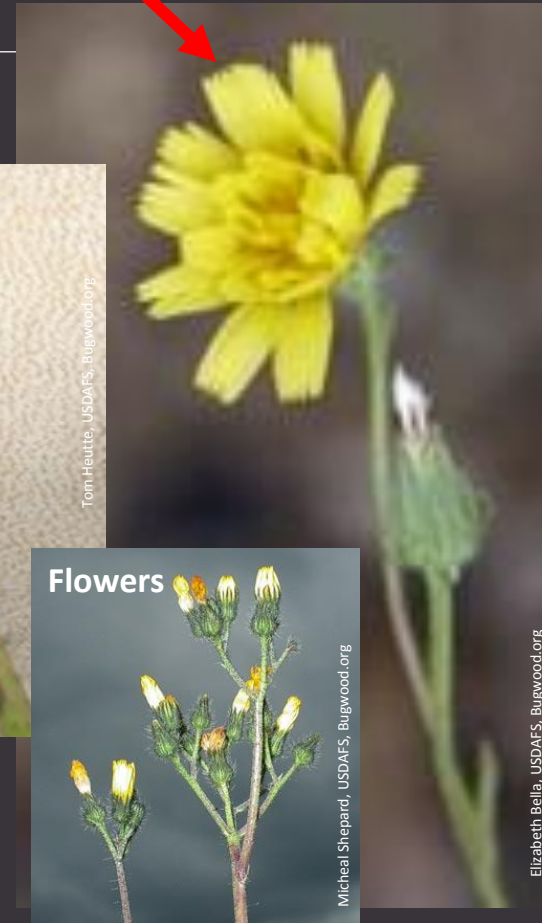
- Short, stiff hairs
- Few leaves
- Exudes a milky juice if cut

Flower:

- Bright yellow
- 5-30 flower heads per stem
- Petals-notched tips



Notched petal tips



Orange hawkweed

(*Heiracium aurantiacum*), perennial

Leaves:

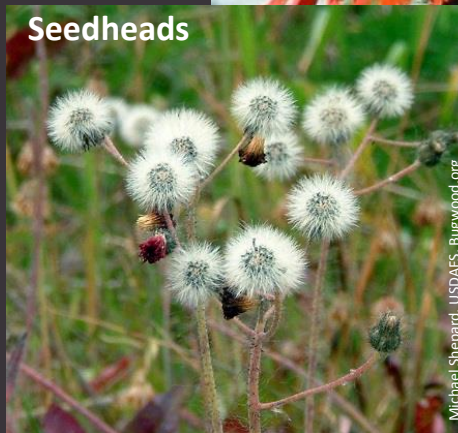
- Spatulate, mostly basal
- Hairy
- Darker green on top

Stems:

- Bristly hairs
- Exudes a milky juice if cut

Flower:

- Red-orange
- Petals-notched tips



Notched petal tips

Tall buttercup

(*Ranunculus acris*), perennial

Leaves:

- Hairy
- Deeply lobed

Stems:

- Branched
- Hairy

Flower:

- Glossy yellow with greenish center
- Occur in clusters



Perennial pepperweed

(*Lepidium latifolium*), perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Petiolate
- Greenish gray green
- Prominent white mid-vein

Flower:

- Four white petals
- Dense rounded clusters on branch tips



Yellowflag iris

(*Iris pseudacorus*), perennial

Leaves:

- Long & linear
- Dark green
- Emerge from ground in fanlike arrangement
- Raised mid-rib

Flower:

- Yellow
- Light-brown to purple veins or flecks



Blueweed

(*Echium vulgare*), biennial

Leaves:

- Covered with stiff hairs
- Alternate

Stems:

- Covered with short hairs and scattered long stiff hairs
- Swollen dark bases that form flecks

Flower:

- Bright blue
- Petals fused to form a short tube that flares



Stem/foliage

Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org

Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org

Priority 2B

These weeds are abundant in Montana and widespread in many counties. Management criteria will require eradication or containment where less abundant. Management shall be prioritized by local weed districts.

Hoary alyssum

(*Berteroa incana*), biennial, perennial

Leaves:

- Grayish-green
- Star-shaped hairs

Flower:

- White
- Deeply notched petals
- Hairy sepals that drop off



Canada thistle

(*Cirsium arvense*), perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Lanceolate
- Spine-tipped

Stems:

- Slightly hairy

Flower:

- Purple fading to white
- Form clusters at branch ends



Field bindweed

(Convolvulus arvensis), perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Arrowhead shape
- All leaves grow on one side of stem

Flower:

- Tubular or bell-shaped
- White to pink



Leafy spurge

(*Euphorbia esula*), perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Contain a white milky sap if severed.

Flower:

- Yellowish green



Roots

Buds that cause
new plants



Whitetop

(*Cardaria draba*), perennial

Leaves:

- Alternate
- Blue-green to gray-green
- Covered with soft white hairs

Flower:

- White flowers
- Dense cluster creates a flat-top



Russian knapweed

(*Acroptilon repens*), perennial

Leaves:

- Covered with fine hairs
- Gray-green

Flower:

- Purple
- Papery tipped bracts



Spotted knapweed

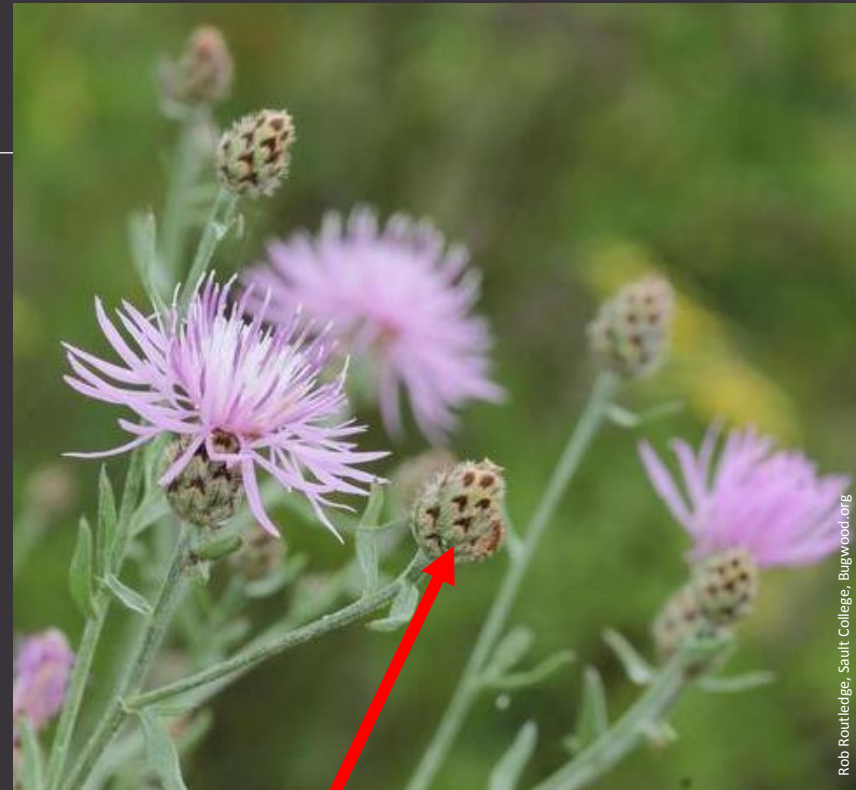
(*Centaurea stoebe*), perennial

Leaves:

- Gray-green

Flower:

- Pinkish-purple
- Dark spot on bract tip with fringed edges



'Spotted' bracts that give this knapweed its name.

Diffuse knapweed

(*Centaurea diffusa*), biennial or short-lived perennial

Leaves:

- Gray-green
- Alternate
- Woolly hairs

Flower:

- White or rarely pink
- Bracts-fringed with cream to brown colored spines



Bracts with spines

Dalmatian toadflax

(*Linaria dalmatica*), perennial

Leaves:

- Pale green-blue green
- Heart-shaped
- Alternate

Flower:

- Snap-dragon-like
- Bright yellow; orange throat, long spur



Leaves clasp
the stem

St. Johnswort

(*Hypericum perforatum*), perennial

Leaves:

- Oval-shaped
- Darker green above
- Tiny transparent dots on surface
- Opposite

Flower:

- Yellow flowers
- Black glands along petal edges



Black glands along petal edge



Transparent dots in leaf

Sulfur cinquefoil

(*Potentilla recta*), perennial

Leaves:

- Palmately compound

Flower:

- Light yellow
- Deeply notched petals
- Yellow center



Common tansy

(*Tanacetum vulgare*), perennial

Leaves:

- Deeply divided into leaflets
- Toothed margins
- Alternate

Flower:

- Yellow-orange
- Button-like flower heads



Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org

Michael Shepard, USDA-ARS, Bugwood.org

Oxeye daisy

(*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), short-lived perennial

Leaves:

- Long narrow stalks, rounded teeth
- Upper stem leaves smaller toward apex, no stalk, toothed.

Flower:

- White petals
- Yellow center



Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org

Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org

Houndstongue

(*Cynoglossum officinale*), biennial

Leaves:

- Long & velvety
- Stem leaves alternate

Flower:

- Scorpion-tail-shaped branch
- Reddish purple flowers



Seeds



Steve Hurst, USDA-NRCS Plants Database, Bugwood.org

Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org

Yellow toadflax

(*Linaria vulgaris*), perennial

Leaves:

- Pale-green to gray-green
- Alternate
- Pointed at both ends, smooth edges

Flower:

- Yellow
- Orange throat, downward spur



Long narrow, smooth leaves

Salt cedar

(*Tamarix ramosissima* & *T. chinensis*), perennial

Leaves:

- Small leaves on green stems
- Scale-like
- Foliage salty to taste
- Alternate & overlap

Stems:

- Smooth dark brown to red brown bark

Flower:

- Pink to white
- Finger-like clusters



Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org



John M. Randall, Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org

Curlyleaf pondweed

(*Potamogeton crispus*), aquatic

Leaves:

- Translucent
- Long
- Look like lasagna noodles

Flower:

- Cream-brown
- Bloom on short emergent spike
- Up to 10 flowers per spike



Priority 3 Regulated Plants

(NOT MONTANA LISTED NOXIOUS WEEDS)

These regulated plants have the potential to have significant negative impacts. The plant may not be intentionally spread or sold other than as a contaminant in agricultural products. The state recommends research, education and prevention to minimize the spread of the regulated plant.

Priority 3: Regulated Plants

Russian olive



Cheatgrass



Priority 3: Regulated Plants

Hydrilla



Brazilian waterweed



Parrotfeather



Check for Updates Periodically

- County Weed District Office
- County Extension Office
- Montana Department of Agriculture
 - <http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Weeds>

Module 3: Assessment
