

HAWKWEEDS



Orange hawkweed (top left) leaves typically have more hair than the Yellow hawkweed (bottom left) leaves



Orange Hawkweed



Yellow Hawkweed

Orange Hawkweed and **Yellow Hawkweed** are perennial weeds with shallow, fibrous roots. They reproduce by seed, stolons and rhizomes and once established, hawkweed quickly develops into a patch that continues to expand until it covers the site with a solid mat of rosettes.

The basal rosette consists of narrow, spatula-shaped leaves that are 4 to 6 inches long; leaves are darker green on the upper surface than the lower surface. Each rosette produces 2 to 8 flower stems that are 10 to 36 inches tall. Stems have short, stiff hairs and contain a milky sap. Each plant consists of 5 to 30 orange (or yellow) flowers heads that are arranged in a flat-topped cluster.

There are several species of "Yellow" hawkweed that all have yellow flowers with variable leaf types and arrangements. They are notorious for their complex and confusing classification and they interbreed freely making them difficult to distinguish from one another.

Control Measures:

The preferred method of control for hawkweed is an Integrated Pest Management plan (IPM). This involves selecting a range of possible control methods to match the management requirements for each site. The goal is to maximize effective control and to minimize the negative environmental and economic impacts.

For large infestations, combine the use of a selective herbicide in the spring with methods that will encourage the growth of grasses such as seeding, fertilizing and good grazing practices. The area should be monitored in June and July for any plants missed by the herbicide.

Mechanical: Mowing will not control hawkweed because they are perennials and reproduce by stolons as well as by seed. Mowed plants respond by sending up shorter stems and quickly flower again. Also, mowed plants put more energy into spreading by stolons resulting in the infestation's size and density to increase.

A single plowing may increase hawkweed cover, but on productive ag sites, an intensive management program that combines cultivation and annual crops can effectively control hawkweed.

For small infestations, plants can be dug up in the spring when the soil is still moist. The roots are fibrous and relatively easy to dig up, but break easily. It is important to remove as much root as possible because hawkweed can resprout from any fragment left in the soil.

If the plants are in flower, cut off and bag all flower heads because they can form viable seeds after they are cut or dug up.

Chemical: Treatment with selective herbicides is most effective in the spring and early summer. Later applications may be less effective, but the staggered flowering period means that spraying can be somewhat effective throughout the growing season.

For spring applications, consider using 2,4-D, WeedMaster, Prescott or Milestone. For spraying done during the bud to bloom stage, you may want to try Transline or a combination of Tordon + 2,4-D.

(509) 477-5777

222 N. Havana, Room 112 ~ Spokane, WA 99202

www.spokanecounty.org/weedboard

Read and follow all label instructions when applying herbicides. Trade names have been used to simplify instructions and no endorsement or warranty is expressed or implied