

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard (*Crepis tectorum*)

Overview

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard is an annual plant in the sunflower family. A native of Europe, it was introduced as a contaminant in seed. It is primarily a weed of cultivated fields, pastures, roadsides and waste areas.

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is widespread in the northeastern United States and Canada. In Alaska the species has been found to colonize roadsides, lightly burnt areas and river bars.

Narrowleaf hawksbeard reduces the value of forage crops.

Infestations in Yukon: Narrowleaf hawksbeard occurs throughout Yukon along all the major highways.



Hawksbeard is a prolific seed producer. The seeds are dispersed by wind, which allows this species to rapidly colonize disturbed and open areas.

Photo: B. Bennett

Identification

Flowers: Heads numerous. Green involucral bracts are arranged in two distinctive rows.

Stems: Stems are single, sometimes branched, rising from a small taproot. Normally growing to 20 – 60 cm or taller.

Leaves: Lower leaves are lanceolate. Stem leaves decreasing in size and mostly linear.

Seed: Hawksbeard only reproduces by seed, but each plant is capable of producing up to 50,000 seeds.



Involucral bracts are of two lengths.

Photo: M. Shephard, USDA, Forest Service, Bugwood.org

Similar Species

The native **elegant hawksbeard** (*Crepis elegans*) is a tufted perennial growing to 25cm from a taproot with leaves mainly in a rosette.

Narrowleaf hawksbeard can be confused with the invasive **narrow-leaved hawkweed** (*Hieracium umbellatum*). Narrow-leaved hawkweed is an erect perennial plant with numerous yellow flower heads, up to 2 cm across. The floral bracts are dark green to black.

It can also be confused with the invasive **meadow or field hawkweed** (*Hieracium caespitosum*), which is a perennial plant. It is difficult to control as it resprouts from root fragments. The *Hieracium* spp. have stems with milky juice.



Leafy stems distinguish the invasive narrowleaf hawksbeard from the native elegant hawksbeard.

Photo: B. Bennett

Ecological Impact

Narrowleaf hawksbeard will displace native colonizers and competes with hay crops.

Habitat

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is commonly found in cultivated fields and in disturbed and open areas.

Prevention

Small infestations of plants are easily controlled by hand pulling. Further monitoring after eradication is important as this plant is likely to be introduced again. Narrowleaf hawksbeard is a prolific seed producer that once established is hard to remove. Annual plants require prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal.

- Caution is necessary when using hay from road ditches or known infested areas.
- The plants will continue to mature after pulling. All plant parts should be placed in a clear plastic bag, left in the sun to decompose and brought to the landfill where the bag should be buried.

Control

Mechanical: Hand-pull small infestations prior to seed set. On cultivated land, narrowleaf hawksbeard can be controlled by tillage. This is best done in fall.

Chemical: For larger infestations chemical control methods may be required. Contact Yukon's Agriculture Branch for more information on herbicides.



Narrowleaf hawksbeard grows from a weak taproot and is easily pulled by hand.

Photo: M. Shephard, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

Yukon Invasive Species Council

www.yukoninvasives.com

info@yukoninvasives.com

PO Box 30111
Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 5M2



November 2010

Funding for this project has been provided by:

Community
Development
Fund

Fonds de
développement
communautaire