

Intruder Alert

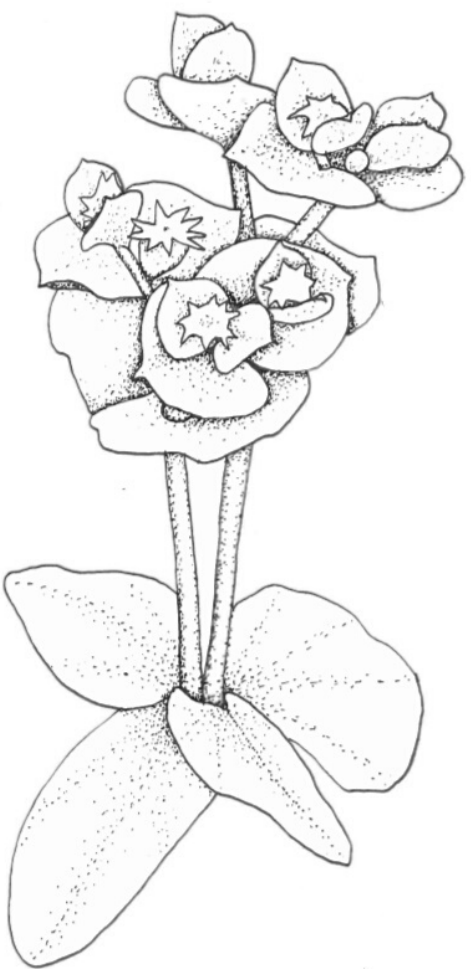
Yukon Invasive Species Activities

An invasive species is an organism introduced from another place that can take over habitat from the plants and animals that live here and have negative effects on our local ecosystems, health or economy. Invasive species can be seen all around us - it is important to report one if you see it, and be sure not to spread it anywhere else! Invasive plant species in the Yukon can be spread in many different ways, such as on your boots, pets, boats and bikes, or through gardening and planting.

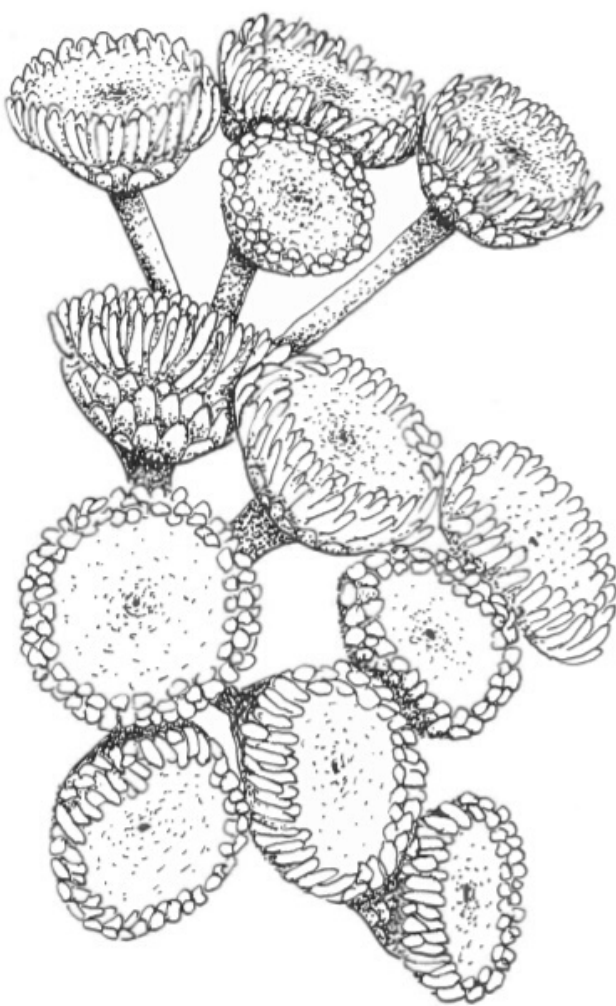
COLOUR AND MATCH

Can identify these invasive species? Colour each of the plants below, and match them to their names and descriptions. For hints, visit www.yukoninvasives.com.

1.



2.



3.



A) Sweet clover: I am one of Yukon's most common invasive plants. I am in the pea family and can be yellow or white. I like to take over gravelly soils along roadways and rivers, and I stop other plants from growing with me.

B) Oxeye Daisy: I am a beautiful flower and people like to keep me in their gardens and wildflower mixes, but I escape and take over native grasslands. I am not tasty for animals, and can increase erosion.

C) Spotted Knapweed: I look like a thistle, and my body produces nasty, bitter chemicals that make sure that I don't have to share space with anyone!

D) Orange Hawkweed: I have intensely orange flowers, and my petals have rougher edges. I am able to invade undisturbed forest sites and work to exclude native species and reduce biodiversity.

E) Crested Wheat Grass: I am a grass that is often used to seed disturbed areas. I grow in large groups that prevent other native species from growing around me.

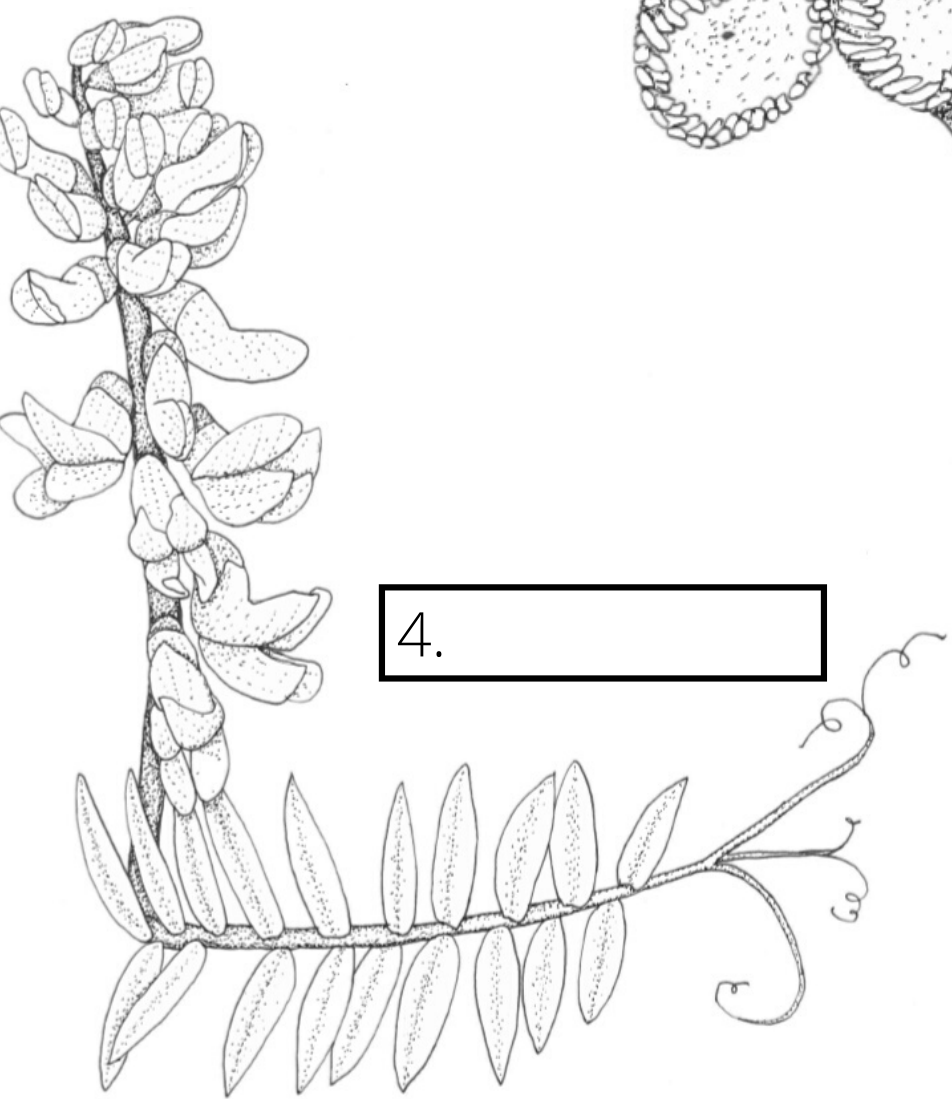
F) Common Tansy: My flowers are yellow, and cute as buttons. Don't be fooled however, if you get close I am quite bitter and can even be mildly toxic to humans and animals. I like to take over ditches and streams, and restrict water flow.

G) Leafy Spurge: I have delicate and tiny greenish yellow flowers. Don't pick me, as my sap will irritate your skin! I grow in large groups, which are very difficult to remove, making me one of the most invasive plants in North America!

H) Greater Butter and Eggs: I am the yellow of butter and eggs, but don't eat me - I am slightly poisonous to livestock. I am an aggressive invader who escapes gardens in yard waste, and takes over habitat from native species.

I) Bird Vetch: Creeping tendrils act like little hooks to allow me to grab onto other plants and choke them out. You can recognize me by my spike of purple-blue flowers, and my black seed pods once I am mature.

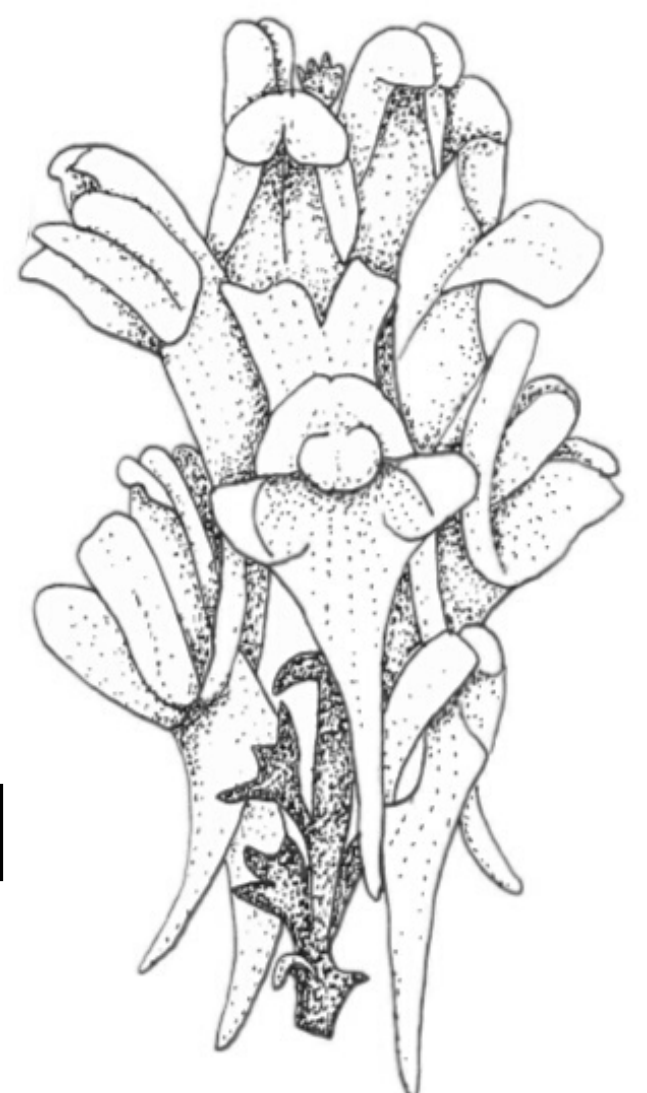
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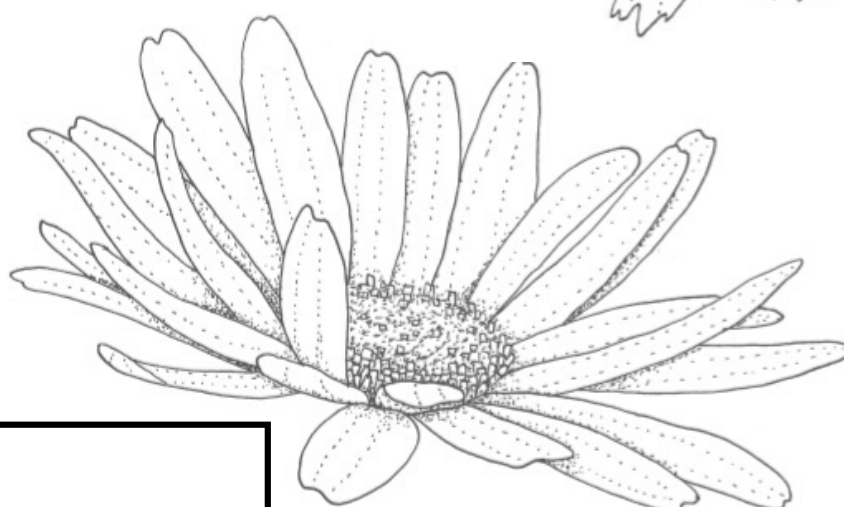
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8.

Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt

Have a look in your backyard or along a well-used path in your neighbourhood. Do you see any of these kinds of plants?

- 1. Find at least 5 different plants.
- 2. Find a plant whose seeds are spread by the wind
- 3. Find a plant that has spines, hairs or thorns
- 4. Find a plant whose seeds are spread by burrs (hairy or sticky seeds)
- 5. Find a plant that has a seed or fruit that might be eaten by an animal.
- 6. Find a plant that smells good
- 7. Find a plant that smells bad
- 8. Find a plant that grows alone, with no other plants around it
- 9. Find a plant growing on rocky or dry sandy ground
- 10. Find a plant with yellow flowers

Clues and Explanations

- A healthy ecosystem has many different plant species growing in an area. Invasive plants often take over from native plants and create an area where there is only one type of plant growing... the invasive one! Some invasive plants like Spotted Knapweed produce a chemical that prevents other plants from growing nearby. (#1 and #8)
- Invasive plants have lots of seeds, and the seeds are very good at getting around! E.g. thistle seeds that blow in the wind or burrs that stick to your socks. (#2 and #4)
- Some invasive plants have spines or thorns that stop animals from eating them, like Creeping Thistle, or Orange Hawkweed that has a hairy stem. (#3)
- Animals and birds can spread plants by eating their fruit and then depositing the seeds in their droppings, or carrying the seed to store for later. (#5)
- Plants that smell good or bad attract different kinds of insects that eat them and often pollinate them: bees are attracted to flowers that smell sweet, while flies may be attracted to flowers that smell unpleasant (#6 and #7). Many invasive plants have yellow flowers (#10) – try and identify the plants you find!
- Invasive plants are very adaptable and can grow in many different habitats: weeds that prefer to grow in gravelly, well-drained areas include Yellow and White Sweetclover, Common Tansy and Spotted Knapweed (#9). Invasive plants that prefer moist areas include Perennial Sow Thistle and Reed Canary Grass.

Word search

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CRESTED WHEAT GRASS
 COMMON TANSY
 LEAFY SPURGE
 GREATER BUTTER AND EGGS
 BIRD VETCH

SWEET CLOVER
 SPOTTED KNAPWEED
 OXEYE DAISY
 ORANGE HAWKWEED



Did you know?

We are on the lookout for 20 invasive plant species in the Yukon! Be an invasives detective and report your plant sightings on iNaturalist at [iNaturalist.ca](https://www.inaturalist.ca) or at [yukoninvasives.com](https://www.yukoninvasives.com)