Altai Wild Rye

Leymus angustus

Common name: Altai Wild Rye
Scientific name: *Leymus angustus*
Family: Poaceae

Photo: Bruce Bennett

Description

Altai Wild Rye is an Asian dune grass found throughout Mongolia, Siberia and China. In Canada, it is cultivated in many places but was previously only known to occur in the wild in Saskatchewan. This is a tall (100 cm) coarse grass that reproduces mainly by seed and forms dense tussocks from short rhizomes.

Range in Yukon

Known from Carcross where it was first reported in 1998. Small patches have been eradicated from the south Klondike Highway. It may have spread to the Alaska Highway and is also known from the BC portion of the Klondike Highway and along the Chilkoot Trail.

Similar Species

Sea Lyme Grass (*Leymus mollis)* and Hairy Lyme Grass *(Leymus innovatus)* are also large perennial grasses. Sea Lyme Grass is only native to the Yukon coast and has anthers 4-9 mm. Hairy Lyme Grass can be distinguished by having hairy glumes and anthers 3.5-10 mm whereas Altai Wild Rye has anthers 3–5 mm long; glumes glabrous, sometimes scabrous. Quack Grass *(Elymus repens)* is widely spread along roadsides and at reclamation projects; often found as a weed in commercial seed.

Ecological Impact

It is a dune stabilizing grass that could be a threat to the Carcross Dunes and the animals and plants that depend on the dune ecosystem. If it spreads along rivers, it could form dense mats that hinder succession and decrease biodiversity.

Control

All known Yukon infestations have been small and have been controlled by pulling prior to the seed maturing. Larger plants must be dug up; most of the roots are less than 30 cm deep. The seeds of wild rye continue to mature after pulling. You may put plants into clear garbage bags and then leave them in the sun to kill off the plants and roast the seeds. Herbicide control may be required in large populations.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Bird Vetch

Vicia cracca

Common Name: Bird or Tufted Vetch
Scientific Name: *Vicia cracca*
Family: Fabaceae

Photo: Michael Rasy Bugwood.org

Description

Multiple weak stems and compound leaves with tendrils (that allow the plant to attach to other plants or objects) characterize this perennial plant. The distinct purplish/blue flowers are arranged in a one-sided spike and turn into brown or black seed pods once matured. Vetch seeds disperse by the ballistic action of drying seedpods. Because Bird Vetch is spreading effectively via seeds and by underground horizontal rootstocks, infestations grow rapidly.

Range in Yukon

It is found in most Yukon communities including Whitehorse, Dawson, Watson Lake and Haines Junction.

Similar Species

Like the garden pea, Bird Vetch has tendrils to help it climb other vegetation. In Yukon only four plant species, all vetches, have tendrils. Three of these are introduced including Bird Vetch. Spring Vetch *(V. sativa)* and Shaggy Vetch *(V. villosa)* are only known from historic collections in Dawson City. Purple Vetch *(V. americana)* is the only native Yukon vetch and is found in southeast Yukon, but has been introduced to Mayo and Rancheria. Purple Vetch has fewer flowers (3-9) per bunch than Bird Vetch (10-30).

Ecological Impact

This plant can overgrow herbaceous vegetation and climb over shrubs like alder and willow. It is known to invade undisturbed sites including spruce forests and south-facing slopes. Due to the fixation of nitrogen it may change the soil composition.

Control

Bird Vetch is difficult to eradicate once established. Hand-pulling can be effective for small infestations, but the area has to be monitored and retreated for several years. Mowing and herbicide control can also be used effectively, especially for larger areas.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Common Tansy

Tanacetum vulgare

Common Name: Common Tansy
Scientific Name: *Tanacetum vulgare*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Andrea Altherr

Description

Common Tansy is an attractive robust perennial plant that grows up to 150 cm tall and forms flat-topped heads of bright yellow, button-like flowers. The plant emits a strong pungent smell when crushed. It is mildly toxic. It grows well in full sun and usually in disturbed sites such as roadsides, riverbanks and beaches. It is considered a noxious weed in some areas of BC, Alberta, and Washington.

Range in Yukon

Presently known from Whitehorse, Marsh Lake, Kathleen Lake and the Alaska, Klondike, and Robert Campbell highways. It is becoming popular as a hardy garden plant.

Similar Species

Lake Huron Tansy *(Tanacetum bipinnatum)* is a native species mainly known from the Porcupine and Yukon rivers (down river of Dawson City). It grows 60 cm tall and has 2-4 heads.

Ecological Impact

Common Tansy can grow along ditches and streams and restrict water flow. The plant is somewhat poisonous to humans and livestock.

Control

All known Yukon infestations have been small and have been controlled by pulling; larger plants may have to be dug up. The seeds of Common Tansy continue to mature after pulling. You may put plants into clear garbage bags and then leave them in the sun to kill off the plants and roast the seeds. Herbicide control may be required in large populations. When dealing with this plant, protective clothing should be worn to keep the plants toxins off the skin.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Creeping Thistle

Cirsium arvense

Common Name: Creeping Thistle or Canada Thistle
Scientific Name: *Cirsium arvense*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Irina Lapina

Description

Creeping Thistle it is native to Europe, Asia and Africa. This perennial plant can form new shoots from deep and extensive horizontal roots. It is one of the most invasive species in North America and is a noxious weed in most jurisdictions throughout Canada and the USA, including Alaska. Male and female flowers occur on separate plants

Range in Yukon

Known from the Haines Highway just south of Haines Junction, the Takhini Hotsprings and the La Biche River. It has occasionally been found in potted garden plants in Whitehorse.

Similar Species

Elk Thistle *(Cirsium foliosum)* is a rare native species found throughout southern Yukon. It is often persecuted because it is mistaken for an introduced thistle. Elk Thistle is a biennial (flowers in the second year than dies) with a large flower head, and a stout carrot-like taproot. Elk Thistle grows in wet areas, usually near rivers.

Ecological Impact

Creeping Thistle competes directly with native plants for nutrients and water; it also produces chemicals that help displace native vegetation. It is an aggressive agricultural weed that has the potential to reduce crop yields by 100%. Due to its abundant and flammable leaf litter it can increase fire frequency and severity.

Control

Because the root system is usually well developed, it is almost impossible to dig out. Therefore perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production, and prevention of dispersal. If roots are cut or broken off new plants may sprout. Mowing or cutting to reduce root reserves and seed production should be done a few times a season for several years. When hand-pulling use a shovel and remove as much of the root as possible. When cut, flowering plants will continue to produce seeds. Plant material should be put in a clear plastic bag and placed in the sun until the roots and seeds are cooked.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Crested Wheat Grass

Agropyron pectiniforme

Common name: Crested Wheat Grass
Scientific name: *Agropyron pectiniforme*
Family: Poaceae

Photo: Stefan Gottermann, YG

Description

Crested Wheat Grass is long lived (15 to 20 years), drought and fire tolerant and has an extensive root system. It spreads primarily via seed but may also spread via rhizomes. The flower spikes are flattened.

Range in Yukon

Widespread agronomic species commonly used in seeding projects. Found throughout Yukon. It may become invasive in native habitats.

Similar Species

Crested Wheat Grass resembles the native wild rye (*Elymus* spp.) but their seeds are arranged like a comb (pectinate) along the stem.

Ecological Impact

It may form monospecific stands and inhibit growth of native species.

Control

Crested Wheat Grass is highly competitive and therefore needs to be controlled quickly to prevent negative impact on native species. Control is a long-term process. As a perennial, when clumps of plants are removed, even small pieces of the root system are capable of regenerating into new plants. Put plants into clear garbage bags and then leave them in the sun to kill off the plants and roast the seeds.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Greater Butter-and-Eggs

Linaria vulgaris

Common Name: Greater Butter-and-Eggs
Scientific Name: *Linaria vulgaris*
Family: Scrophulariaceae

Greater Butter-and-Eggs
Photo: Andrea Altherr

Description

This very attractive plant resembles a yellow perennial snap-dragon. It is widely found in gardens and invading roadsides in most Yukon communities. It is usually less than 50 cm tall, persistent and mildly toxic. These plants are restricted noxious weeds in Alaska.

Range in Yukon

Greater Butter-and-eggs has been found in most communities, primarily from intentional garden plantings. It is widespread in the Whitehorse and Dawson areas, and along the South Canol Road in the Quiet Lake area, Watson Lake and Haines Junction. It is mainly spread through yard waste.

Similar Species

Dalmatian Toadflax *(Linaria dalmatica)* is much more invasive. It is larger with oval clasping leaves and in Yukon is known only from the Alaska Highway on the banks of the Rancheria River where it was apparently eradicated.

Dalmatian Toadflax
Photo: B. Steward

Ecological Impact

Both species are persistent and aggressive invader and may form dense colonies and suppress native grasses and other perennials. They contain a poisonous glucoside that is moderately poisonous to livestock. They are known to alter local pollination ecology and reduce yields in croplands.

Control

Perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal. Greater Butter-and-eggs reproduces both by seed and roots in Yukon.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Leafy Spurge

Euphorbia esula

Common name: Leafy Spurge
Scientific name: *Euphorbia esula*
Family: Euphorbiaceae

Photo: Matt Ball, YG

Description
Leafy Spurge is a deep-rooted perennial with tiny greenish-yellow flowers. When the plant is injured, a milky white sap will flow out that may cause severe irritation to human skin. The plant mainly multiplies by growing shoots from the extensive root system. It may also grow from seed. Leafy Spurge is considered noxious throughout most of its range including BC and Alaska.

Range in Yukon
Known only from the vicinity of Dawson City.

Similar Species
Cypress Spurge *(Euphorbia cyparissias)*, which is a non-invasive garden plant in Haines, Alaska.

Ecological Impact
This invasive plant can form large monospecific stands. Most grazing animals avoid it.

Control
Leafy Spurge is extremely difficult to remove once established due to its extensive root system, making it one of the top 10 invasive plants in North America. Plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal. Burning and mowing are ineffective. Annual herbicide application and hand-pulling may deplete the root system. Rhizomes and flowering plants must be disposed of through burning.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Lucerne

Medicago falcata

Common Name: Lucerne
Scientific Name: *Medicago falcata*
Family: Fabaceae

Photo: Stephan Gottermann, YG

Description

Lucerne, or yellow alfalfa, is a perennial plant in the pea family. The flowers are yellow and the seed pods curved or half-moon shaped. It is a hardy forage crop for grazing animals. It is closely related to, and often hybridizes with, alfalfa *(Medicago sativa)* so these are often considered subspecies.

Range in Yukon

Lucerne is known from the communities of Whitehorse, Mayo, Faro, Carmacks, Stewart Crossing and Haines Junction, but in recent years has spread rapidly, especially along the Alaska and Haines highways. Alfalfa is also widespread throughout the southern Yukon.

Similar Species

Alfalfa *(Medicago sativa)* is not as invasive, but is persistent and slowly spreads in disturbed areas. It can be separated from Lucerne by having pods that are spirally coiled. It comes in colours from white to dark purple including blue, red and yellow. Black Medick *(Medicago lupulina)* is an annual plant that creeps along the ground. It has shown up occasionally at some mine reclamation sites and the Dempster corner.

Ecological Impact

Lucerne may facilitate the invasion of other exotic or native species by increasing the nitrogen contents in the soil. It may invade undisturbed grasslands, reducing biodiversity and changing community structure.

Control

Perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard

Crepis tectorum

Common name: Narrowleaf Hawksbeard
Scientific name: *Crepis tectorum*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Bruce Bennett

Description

With dandelion-like yellow flowers, this annual plant grows a single, sometimes branched stem from a small taproot that is easily pulled. The normally 20 to 60 cm high plant has alternate leaves that get smaller toward the top. Basal leaves are stalked and toothed; stem leaves are stalkless and mostly linear.

Range in Yukon

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard occurs throughout Yukon along all the major highways. This species has been found over 1 km from roadways and along rivers. This plant does not compete well in undisturbed sites, but readily colonizes frequently disturbed sites such as roadsides and rivers.

Similar Species

Spiny Sow Thistle *(Sonchus asper)* is known only from Haines Junction and the La Biche River. This is also an annual plant with a short taproot.

Ecological Impact

Each plant produces more than 49,000 seeds; open areas and disturbed sites are readily colonized.

Control

Annual plants require prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal. Narrowleaf Hawksbeard is easily pulled up by hand. The plants will continue to mature after being pulled. Therefor plants should be placed in plastic bags to roast the seeds. Mechanical and chemical methods can also be used to control this plant. It is a prolific seed producer that once established is hard to remove.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Orange Hawkweed

Hieracium aurantiacum

Common name: Orange Hawkweed
Scientific name: *Hieracium aurantiacum*
Family: Asteraceae

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

Description:

Orange Hawkweed is a perennial herb with fibrous roots. It grows up 20-90 cm tall. Leaves form a basal rosette, occasionally with one or two small leaves on the stem. Leaves and stems are covered in soft bristly hairs that stand erect. The flowers are bright orange-red, with heads 1 cm in diameter. Petals have notched tips.

This non-native plant is known from across Canada, from Labrador to British Columbia; no records are listed from NWT or Nunavut. Widespread in the USA.

Range in Yukon

Currently known only from a roadside location along the Haines Highway.

Similar Species

The intensely orange flowers make this species readily identifiable. When not flowering, however, the leaves and stems might be mistaken for other species of hawkweeds (e.g. Tall Hawkweed, *H. piloselloides*).

Ecological Impact

Orange hawkweed spreads by stolons, rhizomes, and seed. Forming dense mats in forb meadows & wetlands to the exclusion of native species, it lowers species diversity and reduces the forage value of grasslands for grazing animals. Unlike many invasive species, it can invade undisturbed sites and is therefore considered one of the worst nuisance species in agricultural and natural areas in other jurisdictions.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Oxeye Daisy

Leucanthemum vulgare

Common Name: Oxeye Daisy
Scientific Name: *Leucanthemum vulgare*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Andrea Altherr

Description

Oxeye Daisy is a shallow-rooted perennial daisy. It has large white flowers with yellow centers.
Although it is listed as an invasive weed in 8 states and 4 provinces, it is still sold as a garden plant, including here in Yukon, and is commonly included in "wild flower mixes". It is particularly problematic in BC and SE Alaska.

Range in Yukon

Oxeye Daisy has been found along roadsides and in the communities of Dawson, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, Haines Junction, along the Alaska Highway at Johnson's Crossing, Morley and Rancheria rivers, and along the Haines road and Mount Lorne community.

Similar Species

Shasta Daisy *(Leucanthemum maximum)* is a cousin to the Oxeye Daisy that grows 15-30 cm taller and has larger flowers. The invasiveness of Shasta Daisy is subject to more research. The two daisy species are suspected to hybridize. Scentless Chamomile *(Tripleurospermum inodorum)* is an invasive annual or biennial large daisy-like plant which can be separated by its thin dill-like leaves and fibrous roots. It has been reported from scattered locations throughout southern Yukon where it is known to persist.

Ecological Impact

Oxeye Daisy can form dense colonies and replace up to 50% of grass species in a pasture. Grazing animals avoid it. Dense infestations increase the potential for soil erosion.

Control

Perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal. Put plants into clear garbage bags and then leave them in the sun to kill off the roots and roast the seeds.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Perennial Sow Thistle

Sonchus arvensis

Common Name: Perennial Sow Thistle
Scientific name: *Sonchus arvensis*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Irina Lapina

Description

Despite the name, sow thistles more closely resemble giant dandelions than they do the true thistles. Perennial Sow Thistle is considered a noxious weed throughout most of its range including BC, Alberta and Alaska. This is an invasive species able to spread long distances by wind-blown seed. It is perennial with rhizomes that can grow to 10 feet and are very difficult, if not impossible, to remove by hand unless caught at a very early stage of development. It can grow up to 2 m. It is particularly a problem for agricultural producers. In natural areas it has been known to invade beaches and lake shores.

Range in Yukon

Primarily in the Whitehorse area as far north as Carmacks but has been reported from Destruction Bay, Johnson's Crossing and the Kotaneelee gas plant. In recent years it has begun to spread rapidly along highway corridors.

Similar Species

Prickly sow thistle *(Sonchus asper)* is known only from Haines Junction, Whitehorse and the La Biche River. This is an annual plant with a short taproot. Narrow-leaved Hawksbeard *(Crepis tectorum)* is another annual plant with short taproots. It occurs throughout Yukon

Ecological Impact

Perennial Sow Thistle may modify or retard the successional establishment of native species. At high densities in can dramatically reduce water resources and possibly decrease native plant diversity.

Control

Because the root system is usually well developed, it is almost impossible to dig out. Therefore perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal.
If roots are cut or broken off new plants may sprout. Mowing or cutting to reduce root reserves and seed production should be done a few times a season for several years. When hand pulling use a shovel and remove as much of the root as possible. When cut, flowering plants will continue to produce seeds. Plant material should be put in a clear plastic bag and placed in the sun until the roots and seeds are cooked.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Quack Grass

Elymus repens

Common name: Quack Grass
Scientific name: *Elymus repens*
Family: Poaceae

Photo: Steve Dewey, Bugwood.org

Description
Quack Grass is a perennial weed that reproduces through seed and its excessive whitish or yellowish rhizomes that end in sharp points. Leaves are flat and pointed.

Range in Yukon
Scattered along roadsides in Southern Yukon.

Similar Species
Quack Grass has spreading roots. The only other wild rye with spreading roots is Sand-dune Wild Rye (*Elymus lanceolatus ssp. psammophilus*) which has hairy seeds and flower bracts.

Ecological Impact
It forms extensive rhizomes that compete strongly for water and nutrients with cultivated crops and native grasses. It can also hinder the regeneration of native woody species when it forms dense mats.

Control
Perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal. Small fragments of rhizomes can regenerate, making Quack Grass extremely difficult to control mechanically. Quack Grass should not be planted in seeding projects.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Reed Canary Grass

Phalaris arundinacea

Common Name: Reed Canary Grass
Scientific Name: *Phalaris arundinacea*
Family: Poaceae

Photo: Bruce Bennett

Description

Reed canary grass is a robust, sod-forming perennial grass that grows from 50-150 cm tall or more. It is usually associated with moist soils where it forms dense monotypic, persistent stands. This is a highly variable species that has two genotypes, a non-invasive genotype found around hot springs in southeast Yukon and an aggressive invasive genotype which was derived from European stock. It has been used in highway seeding projects and for agriculture in the territory. It is considered noxious in Washington State and is listed as an invasive species in BC and Alaska.

Range in Yukon

Presently the largest known populations are along the Alaska highway from Dän Zhür Chu (Donjek) River to the White River. It is also common on the Haines highway.

Similar Species

Canary grass *(Phalaris canariensis)* is an annual species that has reported from the Pelly River area, but it is not expected to be persistent. Bluejoint (*Calamagrostis canadensis)* is a native perennial grass of wet soils, but is not as coarse and has large soft plumes of flowers.

Ecological Impact

The dense, monotypic and persistent stands may exclude and displace other plants, particularly in wetlands. It may also slow stream flow, eliminating the scouring action needed to maintain the gravel river bottoms essential for salmon production. It may cause hay fever when in flower.

Control

Once established, reed canary grass is extremely difficult to eradicate. Perennial plants require depletion of nutrient reserves in the root system, prevention of seed production and prevention of dispersal.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Scentless Chamomile

Tripleurospermum inodorum

Common Name: Scentless Chamomile
Scientific Name: *Tripleurospermum inodorum*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Richard Old, xidservices.com

Description

This plant can grow annual or biennial and sometimes even a short-lived perennial. It has numerous small and daisy-like flowers. Lower leaves disappear by flowering time. Stem leaves are dill-like, finely divided into short, thread-like segments. They don't smell when crushed.

Range in Yukon:

Scentless Chamomile has been found throughout the southern Yukon including Haines Junction, Whitehorse, Ross River, Teslin, Nisutlin, and Watson Lake. It has also been found along highways and other road system far away from communities. It is considered a noxious weed in all regions of BC.

Similar Species

Seaside Chamomile *(T. maritimum)* is a rare plant on the Yukon arctic coast. Pineapple Weed *(M. discoidea)* is another introduced plant that lacks petals and has a strong odor when crushed.

Ecological Impact

Scentless Chamomile is unpalatable to livestock and can form dense stands in pastures. It is likely to alter soil moisture and nutrient availability for other plants.

Control

Hand-pulling can be effective in small infestations. Seed production can be lowered if plants are mowed before they flower. Seeds do not produce pappus (fluff – like dandelions) and so does not spread as easily as many other species in the daisy family. Since the plants do not compete well with vigorous plants, encouraging competitive plant growth may also be used to control infested areas. To date all Yukon known infestations have been small and easily eradicated.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Smooth Brome

Bromus inermis

Common Name: Smooth Brome
Scientific Name: *Bromus inermis*
Family: Poaceae

Description

Smooth brome is an important agricultural plant. It is a primary component of most hay productions. It is a persistent, nutritious hardy species that spreads through creeping rhizomes and by seed. It is known to invade undisturbed sites. Its hardiness and ability to suppress all other species by forming a thick mat of rhizomes has made it desirable for highway reconstruction projects in the past. Though not considered noxious, this species limits habitat for native species.

Photo: Ohio State Weed Lab Archive, bugwood.org

Range in Yukon

Reported from every community except Old Crow; it is found along most Yukon highways and around old settlements far from roads or rivers.

Similar Species

Pumpelly's brome *(Bromus pumpellianus)* is the native cousin of smooth brome, sometimes considered a subspecies. It has hairy flower bracts or seed casings (lemmas), unlike the hairless casings that give smooth brome its name. It is widespread throughout Yukon.

Ecological Impact

Smooth brome forms a dense sod that smothers and excludes native species decreasing natural biodiversity. Smooth brome inhibits natural succession.

Control

Once planted is difficult to remove. Mechanical treatment or herbicides may be required.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Spotted Knapweed

Centaurea stoebe

Common name: Spotted Knapweed
Scientific name: *Centaurea stoebe*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Michael Rasy, bugwood.org

Description

Knapweeds resemble thistles but lack spiny leaves and stems. They are biennial or short-lived perennials. This species reproduces entirely by seed. Large plants can produce over 20,000 seeds. It has not been known to be a problem in Yukon, but to date it has not had a chance to get established here. British Columbia and Alaska have active programs of eradication. Spotted Knapweed is a restricted noxious weed in BC.

Range in Yukon

Spotted Knapweed has been reported from the Alaska Highway near Hays Creek, the Carcross Desert.

Similar Species

Corn Flower (*Centaurea cyanus*) is an annual garden plant that is sometimes found in commercial "wildflower" mixes. It is occasionally found on roadsides but is not known to persist.

Ecological Impact

Knapweeds may invade undisturbed grasslands and produce chemicals that hinder growth and germination of other plants, reducing biodiversity and changing community structure. Also, grazing animals dislike the bitter taste of knapweed so it reduces the productivity of forage lands..

Control

The seeds of thistle and knapweed continue to mature after pulling. You may put plants into clear garbage bags and then leave them in the sun to kill off the plants and roast the seeds.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

White Sweetclover
Yellow Sweetclover

Melilotus albus, Melilotus officinalis

Common name: Sweetclover
Scientific name: *Melilotus albus* (white) *Melilotus officinalis* (yellow)
Family: Fabaceae

Photos: Andrea Altherr

Description

Sweetclover is an annual or biennial plant in the pea family that can grow 2 m tall but is usually less than 1 m. It rapidly colonizes gravelly well-drained soils such as roadsides, waste areas and river banks and bars. A single plant can produce 300,000 seeds and the seeds remain viable in the soil or under water for many years (80% survival after 30 years). This is likely Yukon's most invasive and problematic species. It is planted in agricultural areas to increase soil nitrogen.

Range in Yukon

White Sweetclover is widespread throughout southern Yukon. It is known along much of the Alaska, North Klondike, Robert Campbell, and Top-of-the-World highways and 30 km up the Dempster Highway. It has proven to be highly invasive along the La Biche River in southeast Yukon. The only sites known on the Yukon River in Yukon are Whitehorse, Carmacks and Dawson; although it is a serious problem on Alaskan waterways including tributaries of the Yukon River.

Similar Species

Yellow Sweetclover *(Melilotus officinalis)*, the yellow coloured relative, is widespread throughout southern Yukon, though not as abundant as its cousin.

Ecological Impact

White Sweetclover readily invades open areas and forest clearings as well as on river banks. It can form large monospecific stands, overgrow and shade native species. It will degrade natural grasslands.

Control

Plants should be pulled or cut before or during flowering. First-year plants may re-grow and can be cut again. Pulling or cutting will have to be repeated over a number of years to deplete the seed bank. If mature seed is not present, plants can be left where they are pulled. The plants quickly die once removed from the soil.

YISC
Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com

Tall Hawkweed

Hieracium piloselloides

Common name: Tall Hawkweed (King Devil)
Scientific name: *Hieracium piloselloides*
Family: Asteraceae

Photo: Marc Schuffert

Description:

Tall Hawkweed is a perennial plant with erect stems up to 1 m tall. Stems exude a white milky sap when broken. Leaves have long hairs on the margins and midveins only; leaves are concentrated in a basal rosette (occasionally with one or two smaller leaves on the stems). The yellow dandelion-like flower heads are clustered, each head approximately 1 cm in width. Tall Hawkweed is considered a noxious weed in the United States. It is found through much of British Columbia; also reported in Alberta and Alaska.

Range in Yukon

Tall Hawkweed is currently known from the Morley and Rancheria areas.

Similar Species

Flowers can look similar to Narrowleaf Hawksbeard (*Crepis tectorum*), Umbellate Hawkweed (*Hieracium umbellatum*), Perennial Sow Thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*). When not flowering, the basal rosettes of leaves can look similar to Orange Hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*).

Ecological impact

A very adaptable species, Tall Hawkweed can grow in a wide range of habitats. It spreads using rhizomes, adventitious roots and seed. Though usually found on disturbed sites, it has been documented in undisturbed natural ecosystems. Its impacts on native plant communities are not well understood at this time.

Control

Control of tall hawkweed is complicated by the presence of rhizomes and adventitious root (i.e. vegetative regeneration) that may sprout following control treatments. Mowing will not prevent vegetative spread of plants. When populations are small, hand digging is best to prevent spread. Research on the effectiveness of chemical and biological control are lacking, though treatments used on other species of hawkweeds may prove useful. Elimination or management of hawkweeds requires a multi-year program that integrates control methods with restoration techniques. Efforts should be made to increase the competitive ability of desired native species.

YISC Yukon Invasive Species Council

Yukon Invasive Species Council
PO Box 30111, Y1A 5M2
info@yukoninvasives.com
www.yukoninvasives.com