



# TANSY RAGWORT

(*Senecio jacobaea*)

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?** As a biennial, tansy ragwort seeds germinate in late fall forming a rosette (a clump of leaves at ground level). The rosette leaves are usually dark green on the top and a whitish-green underneath and have a ruffled look. Early in the second year, the plant starts to form a flower stalk that can grow 2 to 4 feet tall. The leaf stalks and flower stems often are purplish.

**WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO GROW?** Tansy ragwort thrives in low-fertility soils, overgrazed pastures and disturbed sites.

**WHEN DOES IT BLOOM?** Tansy ragwort is a showy plant when it blooms. Numerous yellow, 1-inch wide, daisy-like flower heads with golden or light brown centers form at the tip of each branch from July through October.

**HOW DOES IT SPREAD?** It spreads mainly by seed. A large plant may produce as many as 150,000 dandelion-like seeds which can be carried short distances by the wind.

**TOXICITY:** All parts of this weed are poisonous to animals. It causes liver damage to cattle and horses. Poisoning usually occurs when the animals eat the new rosettes while grazing desirable grasses or are fed infected hay.

**HOW DO I CONTROL IT?** Mechanical controls such as digging/pulling and tillage can be somewhat effective if care is taken to remove or destroy the roots. Cutting/mowing does not control it. See the reverse side for more information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control of Tansy Ragwort. Also see our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.



For more information, contact:

**Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control**  
10905 N. Ramsey Road  
Hayden, ID 83835  
208-446-1290

kcnoxiousweeds@kcgov.us or [www.kcweeds.com](http://www.kcweeds.com)

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# How to Control Tansy Ragwort

Tansy Ragwort is a biennial that reproduces by seed only. Control is accomplished by preventing seed production.

**Mechanical** Hand pulling/digging to remove plants can be effective if the entire root is removed. Mowing is not effective and can stimulate more growth.

**Cultural** The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Killing weeds is only one step, you have to also replace them with something good. Seed and fertilize so your grass can take nutrients away from the weeds and not leave available open soil for new weeds to germinate.

**Biological** Several biocontrol agents are available for Tansy Ragwort including seed flies, flea beetles, and moths. Contact Nezperce Biocontrol center for more information. [www.nezpercebiocontrol.com](http://www.nezpercebiocontrol.com)

**Chemical** \* See our *Chemical Treatment* handout for more information.

- **Aminopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Milestone**. It is broadleaf selective (safe on grasses) and can be very effective on Tansy Ragwort if applied to the rosette, bolting, or early flowering stages.
- **Metsulfuron Methyl** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Escort XP**. It is safe on most grasses and comes as a dry chemical that must be mixed into water and agitated. It can be effective if applied while the plants are growing rapidly but before they flower.
- **Triclopyr** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Garlon**, **Element**, and many “Poison Ivy & Tough Brush Killer” and similar products (check the label to be sure what active ingredient you’re getting). It is broadleaf selective and can be effective on Tansy Ragwort if applied before flowering.
- **Dicamba** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Banvel** and **Clarity**. It is broadleaf selective and can be effective on Tansy Ragwort if applied to actively growing plants in the rosette or bolting stages.

*Chemical recommendations are based on University of Idaho Extension Bulletin 865 [Idaho's Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines Noncrop and Rangeland Sites](#), the book [Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States](#) published by UC Davis Weed Research & Information Center, and herbicide labels.*