



# BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

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<https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/noxious-weeds>

## Weed of the Month

By Chase Youngdahl, *Bonner County Weeds Manager*

In reality, we still have a ways to go until proper spring. However, I would encourage folks to start thinking ahead and planning for spring happenings. It's easy to fall behind (no pun intended, soon the clocks will spring forward) when it comes to weed control, and if you don't have a plan in place, it could turn into a stressful scramble at a point in the year when life in general is starting to become more hectic for many. My department has resources to help—including sprayers for rent, access to some biological control agents, weeds identification assistance and advice/recommendations for herbicides along with other control methods. Additionally, previous programs are still tentatively funded and intact; the Neighborhood Cooperative Cost Share offers some reimbursement for herbicides used to control listed noxious weeds on private property, and the Flowering Rush Cost Share offers reimbursement for a professional herbicide application on the lake bed [prior to summer flooding] around your dock and swimming area. Get in touch anytime for additional information. Allow me to help with your weed control planning!

I'm presenting **Yellow Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)** as the Weed of the Month. This is an Idaho state listed noxious weed with scattered populations throughout Bonner County. It's a creeping perennial, so it primarily spreads by lateral roots, but also spreads by seed. The seeds will not blow onto your property from elsewhere, they need to be carried, as they disperse just a few feet away from the parent plant(s). Unlike some other weeds in the same genus, Yellow Toadflax is very herbaceous and usually tops out at relatively low heights, 1-2 feet. The main identifying factors are the lance-shaped leaves that are very pale in color, as well as the bi-colored flowers (dark yellow to orange encapsulated by pale yellow). The flower color combination inspired an additional common name; some refer to it as 'Butter & Eggs'. It has been reported to cross with its relative, Dalmatian Toadflax, but I have yet to confirm a hybrid in Bonner County.



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Yellow Toadflax was intentionally introduced from Eurasia as an ornamental and did not take long to become an aggressive invader, prompting several states to list it as a noxious weed. It can be found in an array of sites; pastures, forest margins, turf, landscapes and along roadsides. This is one that creates issues in rural, suburban and urban settings due to its resolute adaptability and relative difficulty in controlling it. In rural settings, it displaces native vegetation in natural areas, and outcompetes desirable feed in pastures. This drives out big game and puts pasture animals in a bind, respectively. Yellow Toadflax does contain alkaloids, making it toxic to livestock—most cases of poisoning occur as a result of contaminated hay consumption. In suburban/urban settings, it can quickly overtake a lawn or landscape. This is problematic due to the lack of labeled herbicides for quality control on turf sites.

Biological control agents are available—while they are not as effective at reducing overall density as the agents that target Dalmatian Toadflax, they could help provide some suppression in forest margins or other areas difficult to manage by other means. The most effective control measures for Yellow Toadflax are either specific herbicides, or frequent cultivation. Tilling on arable lands throughout the growing season will keep it at bay, and needs to be repeated for several seasons to deplete the root fragments of their resources. The most effective herbicide combination for range & pasture sites is chlorsulfuron (TelarXP® or generic) + 2,4-D (several trade names) + an MSO surfactant (Syl-Tac® or generic). Chlorsulfuron is labeled for unimproved, industrial turf—but not residential or commercial turf. A residential/commercial turf product needs to be used on those sites and would likely only provide suppression as opposed to full control. If Yellow Toadflax gets into your turf, catch it early to achieve a successful treatment. If it has taken a stronghold, you may need to start over with a new lawn. Imazapyr (Polaris® or generic) is a non-selective herbicide and a tool that could be helpful in a ‘start over’ process.

Bonner County Weeds will have a table at the CO-OP Country Spirit Day. Come by for a chat and to get your hands on some helpful weed control literature.