



BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

1500 Hwy 2, Suite 101 • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • Phone: (208) 255-5681ext.6
<http://bonnercounty.us/noxious-weeds>

Weed of the Month

By Chase Youngdahl

With summer well underway, vegetation is thickening and the weeds are continuing to develop...some even going to seed. If you haven't had a chance to treat your weeds yet, it's not too late—for many species, treatments through July and even in to August can be effective if the proper herbicide mixtures are used. Call the Noxious Weeds office for additional details and recommendations.

Weed of the month for July is **Dalmatian Toadflax** (*Linaria dalmatica*). A state listed noxious weed, and a very hardy perennial in the Figwort family. Introduced from the Mediterranean region of Europe as an ornamental, it grows to be 3-4 feet tall and develops bright yellow snapdragon looking flowers. The stems are rough and somewhat woody at the base and become herbaceous towards the top. The main characteristics to note are the color and feel of the leaves...they are waxy and have a blue-ish tint. Dalmatian Toadflax spreads by both roots and seeds—the root system consists of a deep taproot, reaching 4-10 feet deep, and some creeping lateral roots. Each plant is capable of producing 500,000 seeds per year! However, the seeds fall near the parent plant and need to be carried away by vehicles, shoes or animals to spread.

Dalmatian Toadflax is well adept, growing in crop fields, pastures, roadsides, forest clearings and even riparian areas, and tolerates the poorest of poor sites—it has been known to grow in sub-arctic conditions. It is a persistent, aggressive invader that can drive out native vegetation to the point of altering the plant composition in a given area, thus decreasing native habitat for the animal community. While Dalmatian Toadflax does contain alkaloids, which are toxic to domestic livestock and some big game animals, it is in relatively small concentrations so a significant amount needs to be ingested in a short period of time for poisoning to occur.

I have observed Dalmatian Toadflax go to seed [in Bonner County] right around now, early-mid July, most of the time. The number of viable seeds they produce is outrageous, but they do not travel far on their own and the seed life in the soil is relatively short compared to most other noxious weeds. Even though it's an invader that can spread overwhelmingly, it can be controlled with the right strategy.



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As is the case with most perennials, hand pulling is effective with Dalmatian Toadflax when the plants are young and the root system is less extensive; and mowing prevents the plants from going to seed, but does very little to control it due to vegetative reproduction. Cultivation at two week intervals throughout the growing season provides reasonable control, probably the best method for a mechanical option. The most effective herbicide options are chlorsulfuron products, trade names include Telar[®], Glean[®] and other generic chlorsulfuron may exist. Use one of these products along with a silicone or vegetable oil concentrate surfactant for best success—a non-ionic surfactant may suffice, but the silicone/vegetable oil surfactant helps to penetrate the waxy leaves. Application timing is best prior to bloom, but at any point prior to going to seed is acceptable. Another herbicide option for control later in the season (after the plants go to seed) is Perspective[®] (aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron), however, take extreme care not to treat around the root zone of nearby trees and desirable vegetation with this product. Read and follow label guidelines before making an herbicide treatment. Eight insects have been approved for use in the United States for biological control of the Toadflaxes. A very successful agent on Dalmatian Toadflax is a stem-mining weevil called *Mecinus janthiniformis*—it has demonstrated an ability to wipe out colonies of the weed. You may request a release of this agent through the Bonner County Weeds office. With that, enjoy the dog days of summer and happy weed killing!