



BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

1500 Hwy 2, Suite 101 • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • Phone: (208) 255-5681ext.6
<https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/noxious-weeds>

Weed of the Month

By Chase Youngdahl

We're in the midst of summertime, the bread and butter for living in this part of the country for many of us—our reward for enduring 8 months of winter! There are numerous summer activities that are a lot more fun than spraying or pulling weeds, but as is the case with any other chore, it must be done. May & June are the best months [as a general rule of thumb] to achieve maximum control for the majority of noxious weeds in this region, however the rest of the growing season is still a viable timeframe to undertake weed control projects, especially with the proper approach. Some weeds have gone to seed already, while others are still in the bloom stage or not even blooming yet. The Bonner County Weeds office is here to help with weed control advice.

Weed of the month for July is **Oxeye Daisy** (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), an often overlooked state listed noxious weed. It's a short lived perennial that spreads from seeds and root fragments, grows about 1 to 3 feet in height, and has the classic daisy looking flower—yellow disks in the center surrounded by white ray flower petals. The leaves alternate on the stem and have coarsely serrated margins; during the seedling stage the basal leaf clusters are more rounded with smoother margins. Take note not to confuse Oxeye Daisy with the native Common Daisy or the far less invasive Shasta Daisy. Common Daisy grows much shorter than Oxeye, about 4-6 inches; where Shasta Daisy grows much larger [all the way around], usually about double the height and double the flower size from that of Oxeye. But Oxeye Daisy is what you will see in most given areas the vast majority of the time.

Oxeye Daisy likes to grow in pastures (especially overgrazed ones), on roadsides, on disturbed sites and just about any site that's neglected. It thrives in poor soils, including contents that are high in clay or high in sand. This isn't the worst weed in the world to try to eliminate from a site, the seed life is relatively short and the root system is not overly extensive—making it more of an opportunist rather than an aggressive spreader. You can use cultural control/preventative measures to get rid of or prevent Oxeye Daisy, which entails site management for good soils and competing plant health. While eradication on a statewide, regional, county or municipal level is extremely unlikely due to the large footprint it has imposed on the western United States, it is possible to eradicate it from localized sites. That said, if given the opportunity it will overtake a pasture and crowd out native plants and desirable livestock forage. It's not poisonous to livestock and it is reasonably palatable (if there's nothing better available), but contains very little nutritional value and milk from dairy cattle that have consumed it can have an unpleasant flavor. Although it's not really applicable in this part of the state, I will point out that Oxeye Daisy is a host for yellow dwarf potato virus.



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As I mentioned, cultural control is an effective way to combat Oxeye Daisy being that it is an opportunistic invader. Keep the surrounding grasses as healthy as possible with fertilizer treatments, and irrigate if feasible for the site. Grazing is an option; sheep, goats and horses may consume enough to sustain some control. Cultural methods in conjunction with grazing can make for an adequate one-two punch on Oxeye Daisy. Mechanical control for Oxeye may be achieved by digging/pulling the plants out, and since the root system is fairly shallow you may be able to get rid of small isolated infestations this way, provided the soil is moist enough when you're performing the task. Another mechanical method, which is the same for most perennial weeds, is to disk (or rototill on a landscape scale) the ground every 2-3 weeks throughout the growing season. If you have followed my articles you may have picked up on a pattern regarding mechanical control with perennials...the key is to exhaust the viable root fragments of their resources, since perennials spread by both seeds and roots. You can clip flower heads off until you're blue in the face yet never get ahead of the curve because you are only addressing half of the equation—the roots will continue to propagate unless you destroy them. Control with herbicides on Oxeye Daisy is effective using MSM60 (metsulfuron) or Curtail®/Cody® (clopyralid + 2,4-D amine) prior to bloom, or Milestone® (aminopyralid) at any point during the growing season. Aminopyralid products act as both a post-emergent and pre-emergent chemistry, killing what's visible (growing) and essentially killing the seeds in the ground. Site restrictions may apply, contact Bonner County Weeds or the Idaho Department of Agriculture Pest Investigator for any assistance you may need interpreting labels. Enjoy your summer and kill those #@*\$%! weeds when you get a chance! And yes, even the innocent looking Oxeye Daisies. :-)