



## BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

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

### Weed of the Month

By Chase Youngdahl, *Bonner County Weeds Manager*

Bonner County has experienced a significant influx of new residents within the last year. If you are new to our area, especially if you came from a more urban setting and are trying out rural life, give the vegetation on your property a good once-over. Odds are, you'll start seeing "pretty flowers" and may be tempted to transplant them and/or encourage their propagation. Please do some research before doing that, not all plants on our lands belong here, and many of them cause a myriad of issues. A noxious weed is defined in Idaho law as a non-native plant having the potential to cause injury to public health, crops, livestock, land or other property; and which is designated as noxious by the director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. A good place to start is by reaching out to experienced neighbors to glean some basic knowledge from. You can obtain the Selkirk Cooperative Weed Management Area – Noxious Weed Handbook for free from our office to assist in weed identification and control recommendations. You can also reach out to my department anytime for identification assistance and management advice—contact info is on the Bonner County Noxious Weeds website. Spotted Knapweed, Orange & Yellow Hawkweeds and Oxeye Daisy are a few of the most commonly battled noxious weeds in Bonner County. These have been featured in previous columns and the archives can be viewed on our website.

Weed of the Month is **Tansy Ragwort** (*Senecio jacobaea*). This is not the same as Common Tansy, which is a prolific invader in our region (also featured in a previous column). Tansy Ragwort is an Idaho state listed noxious weed, and is on the EDRR (early detection, rapid response) list in Bonner County. Introduced from Eurasia as a seed contaminant on ships, it is well established west of the Cascades. There are only light infestations on this side of the Cascade Range, generally. Tansy Ragwort is only known to infest a few properties in Bonner County, so it is one of the small infestation species that we treat for landowners to prevent it from becoming a widespread issue. It's a biennial—starting as a basal rosette in the first year and bolting to heights ranging from 1'-5' in the second year. The leaves have a distinct, ruffled appearance and are dark green on the top side with a greenish-white underbelly.



## BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

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

Stems can be singular, or several can emerge, forming a clump. The flowers are two-tone yellow, with the disk flowers being a darker mustard yellow and the ray flowers (outer petals) being a brighter shade. The flowering period is from early July to early September.

At a glance, especially from a distance, St. Johnswort can be a look-alike. Upon closer inspection, the separating factors become much clearer; the leaf and flower structure are very different. Leaves of Ragwort plants have that ruffled, crinkled look, and they do not have the translucent specks that St. Johnswort has. Ragwort also has the disk-ray flower combination, where St. Johnswort does not.

Aside from being toxic to livestock, a significant matter with Tansy Ragwort is that it is both shade and sun tolerant—so there is potential for it to thrive and take over on many different sites. It's built to spread in the northwest, so it's crucial to keep it in the small infestation category. I would probably be off my rocker to think we could achieve complete eradication in Bonner County at this point, but it is absolutely a realistic goal to keep it from needing to be elevated to the next infestation level category. But I can still dream of the small chance we have to achieve eradication with aggressive efforts...“So you're saying there's a chance?” [In my best Lloyd Christmas voice]. You'll either get that reference or you won't. ;-)

Please notify my department if you identify, or strongly suspect, an infestation of Tansy Ragwort. We utilize a grant program to treat small infestation species for landowners at no charge to them. The north end of the Selle Valley is an area to watch especially close. With the current population boom, a lot of folks are arriving here from west of the Cascades, so unintentional introduction of Tansy Ragwort seeds hitchhiking on vehicles or equipment could sprout brand new infestations anywhere.

Hope you all have a great Independence Day holiday and a fun filled summer. See you at the fair!