



# 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, *Bonner County Weeds Manager*

Anything new in the world these days? Ha ha... I'm trying to navigate through this mess while assisting customers, uninterrupted, with services that Bonner County residents have become accustomed to. There was no choice but to cancel the annual Bonner County Weeds Seminar, but all other services offered by my department are still in place. The landowner assistance programs, weeds identification, recommendations/weed control advice and sprayers for rent are all "still a go". This is a fluid situation so circumstances could be different by the time you're reading this; however, our office is [currently] closed to the public. It appears as though the state of Idaho might lift restrictions in stages throughout May & June—it remains to be seen how that will align with opening our office to the public. That aside, I can take care of most customer service needs via phone, email and/or snail mail. I'll be able to perform site visits [if necessary] for weeds identification while following social distancing guidelines, but samples cannot be brought into the office until further notice. Additionally, all primary touching points on the rental sprayers will be sanitized prior to being available, and will continue to be sanitized for the duration that the CDC recommends such practices. Kind of a weird year so far, but we're doing our best to adapt.

Weed of the month is **Hoary Alyssum (*Berteroa incana*)**, a state listed noxious weed in the mustard family. This is the newest noxious weed confirmed in Bonner County, it showed up near the north end of the Selle Valley last summer. Given its status here, it is in the Early Detection – Rapid Response category, so we're able to treat it with grant funds from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. Hoary Alyssum is an annual (summer or winter) growing 1-2 feet in height with multiple stems emerging from the rosette, and the linear-elliptic leaves have a grayish-green color in addition to a hairy appearance. The flowers are white with 4 petals per flower head, separated by relatively deep notches. The flower stalks elongate during the fruiting period, and the seedpods that develop from the fruit have an oval shape that abruptly bottlenecks to a narrow tip.



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It has been known to infest meadows, pastures, roadsides, vacant areas and CRP grounds. Being that Hoary Alyssum was just recently confirmed in Bonner County, please keep a close eye out for it, especially in the Selle & Elmira valleys. It can be difficult to confirm prior to flowering, but once it does flower the ‘rabbit ear’ appearance created by the notched petals is the giveaway. I don’t have much personal experience with this being that it is new to our locale, but my research indicates that it’s not really built to spread quickly, which means we should be able to eradicate it! It’s an annual, so it can only spread by seeds—which are heavy and lack dispersal adaptations according to a university publication. The seeds need to be introduced by a contaminant; hay, animals, equipment, etc. Hoary Alyssum is poisonous to livestock, it has been reported to cause leg swelling and fever in horses.

Annual weeds can be controlled by mechanical means with relative success due to their inability to propagate vegetatively. Cut or mow prior to flowering, or hand pull if just a few plants exist. If a seed bank has been established, herbicide control is necessary for eradication. Being in the mustard family, it is best controlled using metsulfuron (Escort® & generics) or chlorsulfuron (TelarXP® & generics). And a good rule of thumb for many herbicide applications [and the control of many different weeds] is to add a 2,4-D product as well as a surfactant for enhanced control. Think of 2,4-D and the surfactant as a weapon, and the specialty chemistry (metsulfuron or chlorsulfuron in this case) as the ammunition.

Again, please let me know if you suspect Hoary Alyssum. I would like this to end in a success story! And I’m still here as your weed control resource—I’m readily accessible by phone, email and Facebook messenger. Weeds are unaffected by viruses!