



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*

The offseason has arrived; time always seems to march on quickly. I'm sorry to have missed the previous Roundup issue, as I had a great late summer/early fall article in the works. Life happens! I'll sit on what I started and, all forces willing, will get some version of it out in September of 2022. We experienced a scorching summer that started early and almost felt like it would never end. From a selfish point of view, I really liked it! I enjoy my beach time, and being able to swim comfortably starting in the month of June was a bonus. From the big picture point of view, it was not a good thing—most hay yields were less than half of average, and we were on pins and needles with the wildfire situation. Who knows what next year's weather will bring, but you can take steps to ensure that you maximize your hay production by implementing a fertilizer regiment and performing appropriate broadleaf herbicide applications to reduce competition in grass hay crops. Without irrigation, you will never achieve full yield with as hot and dry of a summer (and spring) as we just had—but if the measures that I outlined is the difference of just a few tons, and just a few more tons is all you need to get by, then it should be worth it. Even though it's November now, fertilizer applications are still effective, assuming [snow] conditions allow by the time this is published. A balanced blend, or a low nitrogen/high potassium blend is a good way to go.

If you missed the Bonner County Fair, we had brand new noxious weed handbooks hot off the presses at our booth. It's titled the Selkirk Cooperative Weed Management Area – Noxious Weed Handbook (Revised 05/2021) and includes updated herbicides, updated noxious weed categories for our area, some corrected terminology and updated points of contact for noxious weeds from our regional agency partners. These are available in the lobby of the office suite that my department is housed in (Suite 101 of the Bonner County Administration Building), at the DMV, the Extension Office, the Conservation District and the herbicide aisle at the CO-OP.



BONNER COUNTY NOXIOUS WEEDS

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

The Weed of the Month is a fun one; **Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)**. This herbaceous perennial is likely the most widely recognized weed in the world. It also seems to be about as polarizing as politics! The common Dandelion is originally from Europe, but has long since become naturalized across the globe. Documentation of the Dandelion dates back to the 11th century, when the common name in one of its countries of origin, France, was *dent-de-lioun*. The name translated to “tooth of the lion”, seemingly alluding to the sharply lobed leaves. The root crowns can generate new shoots, but the prolific mechanism of spread is via the windborne seeds. The seeds are incredibly lightweight, and may blow for miles until they catch hold in a destination that will soon be home. Who doesn’t have childhood memories of blowing the white sphere full of mini parachutes off of a Dandelion? Yes, Dandelions are beneficial weeds—they provide an early source of nectar for pollinators, they are edible in their entirety [with a reported high nutritional value] and are actually good forage in rangeland. The other side of the coin is that they’re a nuisance in turf—commercial and residential. And in some cases, they may be an invasive issue in agricultural croplands. For the professional applicator in the turf & ornamental industry, calls on Dandelion infestations probably make up the bulk of initial customers. Marketing for home & garden lines of herbicides are nearly always geared towards Dandelion control—I’m sure everyone has seen such TV commercials. For the Dandelion preservationists, it can be annoying, or even offensive, that anyone would entertain the notion of killing Dandelions on purpose. Therein lies the polarization. My personal preference is to keep my lawn looking like a golf course, but to plant a variety of flowers flanking the lawn for the pollinators. It takes a little research to dial in what grows well in this zone, but there are non-invasive ornamentals that flower during different windows of time, including early when the Dandelions start flowering. I like to maintain a good balance in my ornamental beds, where the goal is to offer something to the pollinators for the entire growing season.

If you’re looking to clean up your lawn of Dandelions (or if your homeowner’s association is asking you to do so), they are among the easiest turf weeds to kill. Oftentimes, the home & garden variety of selective weed killers gets the job done. This includes granular weed & feeds, which can still be applied (pending the snow situation at time of publishing). If you’re looking to clear the deck of all the turf weeds along with the Dandelions, the following turf labeled herbicides are solid choices: Trimec® (2,4-D + Dicamba), TripletSF® (2,4-D + MCPP + Dicamba) or Foundation® (2,4-D + Triclopyr + Dicamba + Sulfentrazone). These are just a few options, among others.

Cheers to a happy, healthy holiday season.