



BONNER COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL

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

Weed of the month

By Chase Youngdahl

Those of you that have followed the CO-OP publication I'm sure are familiar with the weeds education articles that Brad Bluemer has produced over the years. The vastly knowledgeable Bonner County Weeds Superintendent of 15 years (and weeds professional of over 40 years) decided to hang it up and call it a career this last fall. Allow me to introduce myself as the new Weeds Superintendent of Bonner County...my name is Chase Youngdahl, a Bonner County local that has worked as Brad's assistant for the last 4+ years and have been involved in the weeds world to some capacity or another for nearly 15 years. I'm looking forward to serving the people of Bonner County in this new role.

I will be carrying on with Brad's project with my own twist; 'weed of the month' articles where I will delve into and focus on one noxious weed, turf weed, aquatic weed, or other such problem weed per article. I realize we are right in the middle of the winter doldrums and weeds are probably not on most people's radar right now, however spring will be here before we know it and it is always a good thing to head in to spring with some newfound education or a solid review (depending on your background), so as to be ready to hit the ground running for the growing season!

Weed of the month for my first installment is **Orange Hawkweed** (*Hieracium aurantiacum*). It is on the Idaho Noxious Weeds List and is widespread across Bonner County. Orange Hawkweed is an herbaceous perennial in the sunflower family, the same family as the Dandelion, and has a very similar flower structure to the Dandelion—a cluster of these flowers are formed at the end of a single stem. Stems are hairy, and a singular 6-12 inch stem bolts up from a base of hairy, oblong-elliptic shaped leaves. Blooming takes place from late May to mid June and goes to seed shortly thereafter—weather and conditions for a particular season will determine timing in this process. For example, the previous couple of years were in a strong El Niño cycle which made for very warm, dry springs and summers. During this time I observed Hawkweeds blooming and going to seed on the early end of the time frame. I would like to note that Yellow Hawkweed is virtually the same as Orange Hawkweed except the flowers are yellow instead of orange (as the names indeed suggest), and the stems typically grow a little taller. The yellow variety is on the Idaho Noxious Weeds List as well, and sometimes grows in conjunction with the orange variety.



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Orange Hawkweed reproduces both vegetatively and by seed, somewhat limiting control options. New plants start from underground runners (rhizomes) and above ground runners (stolons), as well as seeds that disperse in the wind. It can be found in a variety of areas including meadows, forests, pastures, roadsides, vacant lots, and lawns. Since it propagates vegetatively mowing is not an effective control method and actually causes it to spread, same with cultivation. There are no biological control agents available at this time for Orange Hawkweed, or any other Hawkweed, but there are agents in the testing process. Hand pulling is effective in gardens and in very small patches if the infestation is detected early. The following chemical control options are effective: Aminopyralid, trade name Milestone® at 6 ounces per acre, Clopyralid+2,4-D, trade name Curtail® at 2 quarts per acre, or Triclopyr+2,4-D, trade name Crossbow® at 2 quarts per acre—it is highly recommended to use a surfactant, referred to as a spreader or sticker, at 1 pint per acre with all herbicide mixtures, and treat prior to the blooming stage in the spring or in the fall after a few good rains for best results. Contact the Bonner County Noxious Weeds office or your favorite weeds professional if you need further assistance to determine which product suits your land management situation the best. Always read and follow product labels.

Orange Hawkweed can quickly form solid, dense mats that crowd out native vegetation and grasses. This reduces forage in pastures, chokes out agricultural crops, ruins landscapes, and degrades property overall. Methods to prevent infestations include minimizing ground disturbances, cleaning vehicles and ATVs that have been through infestations, and keeping your grasses/desirables fertilized. Prevention is always the best control.