



*Senecio jacobaea*

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

## Tansy Ragwort

Stinking Willie, Staggerwort

**Family:** Asteraceae

**Origins:** Native to Northern Africa, Europe, and Western Asia. The first infestations of Tansy Ragwort recorded in Western North America were on Vancouver Island in 1913 and Oregon in 1922.

**Range:** Heavily distributed west of the Cascade Mountains in Washington and Oregon.

**Habitat:** Commonly grows in disturbed areas such as roadsides, pastures, and logged forest land. Tansy Ragwort thrives in either full sun or partial shade; it does not exhibit a preference for soil texture or acidity.

**Impact:** Reproduces primarily by seed; however, it can reproduce vegetatively from its taproot. Each plant produces 150,000 seeds, which can remain viable in the soil for 16 years. Plants will continue to develop seeds for weeks after being cut or dug up.

Tansy Ragwort contains alkaloids that become toxic to both humans and livestock when broken down by liver enzymes. This plant has a distinct odor and is generally not palatable to livestock, and is only eaten when food is scarce. The highest risk to livestock is after the plants have been cut and mixed in with hay because the plants are not as bitter but just as toxic.

**Description:** Tansy Ragwort is a biennial or sometimes perennial herbaceous weed that can grow up to 6 feet tall. It grows as a rosette the first year, then bolts with one or more stems and flowers the second year. Dark green basal leaves are somewhat hairy on the underside, appearing white. The rosette has a ruffled appearance due to the deeply indented and blunt toothed lobes of the leaves. The leaves found on the flowering stems are alternate and sessile. Flower heads are yellow clusters with many disk flowers and 13 ray flowers resembling petals, with an overall daisy-like appearance.

**Common Look-Alikes:** Common St. Johnswort, Common Tansy, Woodland Groundsel, and Common Groundsel.

*\* Toxic to humans and livestock. Consumption of milk or honey produced in areas with significant Tansy Ragwort infestations may be problematic for humans.*



## Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed's IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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## Non-Herbicide Control

<b>Mechanical</b> (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	<p>Digging or pulling plants can be effective, especially if the soil is moist to help remove the entire root system. Cutting or mowing plants will control seed production if done before plant bolts and flowers. Repeated mowing throughout the season may worsen the infestation by encouraging the plants to become perennial. Dispose of plants in a sealed bag in the trash.</p>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>Good pasture management techniques will help to prevent or reduce infestations. Seed and plant areas with non-invasive plants to provide competition and suppress seed germination of Tansy Ragwort. Reduce soil disturbance as much as possible, and mulch disturbed areas to prevent new germination of Tansy Ragwort seeds, as light is necessary for seeds to germinate.</p> <p>Sheep are resistant to the toxin of Tansy Ragwort, and may prefer to graze it. Sheep grazing only prevents the production of flowers and seeds. Do not overgraze sheep in areas with Tansy Ragwort. Overgrazing leads to loss of native vegetation and reduced competition for Tansy Ragwort, causing re-infestation upon removing the sheep.</p>
<b>Biological</b>	<p>The Ragwort Flea Beetle, <i>Longitarsus jacobaeae</i>, and Ragwort Seed Head Fly, <i>Botanophila seneciella</i>, have demonstrated various degrees of success as biological controls. The Flea Beetle larvae feed in the root system, while the adults feed on the leaves. The Seed Head Fly larvae feed in the seed heads</p> <p>The Cinnabar Moth, <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>, is no longer an approved biological control agent because it has been found to feed on a few native species. The Cinnabar Moth exists in Western Washington in small numbers from past introductions.</p> <p>Biological control agents are slow; generally, reserved for areas where access is limited, and where other control methods cannot be reasonably used.</p>

## Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

<b>Dicamba + 2,4-D</b> (Weedmaster, Range Star)	<p><b>Timing:</b> Spring through summer to rosettes or bolting plants, before bud formation; fall to control rosettes.</p> <p><b>Remarks:</b> Consult labels for grazing restrictions; repeat applications for several years to control new seedlings; grass tolerates dicamba; do not apply near water.</p>
<b>Aminopyralid</b> (Milestone)	<p><b>Timing:</b> Apply to actively growing plants.</p> <p><b>Remarks:</b> Many desirable plants can be seriously injured or killed; using a non-ionic surfactant will help enhance control under adverse conditions; do not apply near the root zone of desirable trees; do not compost plant material that has been sprayed by this product; do not use manure from fields that have been sprayed with this product; do not apply near water.</p>
<b>Triclopyr +2,4-D</b> (Crossbow, Crossroad)	<p><b>Timing:</b> Spring through summer to rosettes or bolting plants, before bud formation; fall to control rosettes.</p> <p><b>Remarks:</b> Consult labels for grazing restrictions; repeat applications for several years to control new seedlings; do not apply near water.</p>

\* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), [nwcb.wa.gov](http://nwcb.wa.gov). Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.