



Hypericum perforatum

WA – Class C Noxious Weed

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Common St. Johnswort

Goatweed, Klamath Weed, Tipton Weed

Family: Clusiaceae

Origins: Native to Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa. Introduced to the United States as a medicinal herb in Philadelphia in 1696 by German Pilgrims.

Range: Considered naturalized in many parts of the United States.

Habitat: Commonly found in disturbed areas, right-of-ways, trails, pastures, or open rangeland. Prefers well-drained locations with poor soil and full sun.

Impact: Common St. Johnswort can quickly invade and out-compete native forage and grazed species. It is toxic to livestock and humans even after the plant is cut and dried. These characteristics have resulted in significant economic losses of both livestock and rangelands. Reproduction can occur by seed or vegetatively, from above-ground creeping stems and underground rhizomes. Each plant can produce up to 34,000 seeds per year, which can remain viable in the soil for up to 30 years.

Description: Common St. Johnswort is an upright perennial that typically grows between 1 to 2.5 feet tall. Green to reddish stems may be single or multiple. Stems are smooth, somewhat two sided, woody at the base and branching out towards the top. Leaves are opposite, narrow, lance-shaped, and 1 to 2 inches long. They are oppositely stalkless and have pointed tips. Each leaf is spotted with tiny translucent or purplish-black dots.

Flowers are yellow, star-like, 3/4 inch in diameter, and have 5 petals with tiny black dots on the margins. Flowers occur in clusters at the ends of stems, with 25 to 100 flowers per cluster. Seeds are a dark rusty brown color giving the plant an overall brown appearance later in the season. Flowers bloom from May to September.

Common Look-Alikes: Common Tansy, Tansy Ragwort, Giant St. John's Wort.

**Common St. Johnswort is toxic to humans and livestock. It contains hypericin, a phytotoxin that travels to the skin after ingestion. Ultraviolet rays activate the hypericin, leading to dermatitis, itching, swelling, blisters, and open sores. Once a sensitivity to hypericin is developed, it is cumulative. Reports of contact photosensitivity include second-degree blisters on eyelids and forehead.*



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 Resource & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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Non-Herbicide Control

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Hand pulling is effective on small infestations. Make sure to remove all the roots and dispose of them in a sealed bag. Monitor the site to remove any new growth. Tilling is effective if repeated in croplands.
Cultural	Maintaining healthy, desirable vegetation can prevent Common St. Johnswort infestations.
Biological	Three different Biological agents are available for Common St. Johnswort in Washington State. The St. Johnswort Root Borer, <i>Agrilus hyperici</i> , larvae feed within the roots; most infestations with a large population of the root borer die. The St. Johnswort Moth, <i>Aplocera plagiata</i> , larva feed on the leaves, inhibiting flower formation and seed production. The Klamath Weed Beetle, <i>Chrysolina quadrigemina</i> and <i>Chrysolina hyperici</i> , larvae and adults, feed on the leaves of Common St. Johnswort.

Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

2,4-D (Many Trade Names)	Timing: Apply to plants before flowering, preferably on new seedlings after germination. Remarks: Repeat applications as needed; avoid drift to sensitive crops; do not apply near water.
Metsulfuron (Escort, MSM)	Timing: Apply after weeds emerge. Remarks: Do not allow spray to drift to sensitive crops; apply only to pasture, rangeland, and non-crop sites; application sites differ between products; for best results, use a surfactant; do not apply near water.

* 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. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.