

INVASIVE WEEDS FACT SHEET



Photo by: Michael Shephard, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

Tansy Ragwort (*Senecio jacobae*)



Clackamas River
Basin Council

BASIC FACTS:

- A member of the sunflower family; native to Europe, Asia, and Siberia
- Introduced to North America as a medicinal herb, and it is found in the Northwest, as well as many other states across the country.
- First found in Oregon in 1922 (unknown as to how it arrived)

CHARACTERISTICS / IDENTIFIERS:

- Tall, branchy plant (can grow up to 6 feet tall); from seed or rootstocks.
- Fleshy taproots which can extend one foot deep into the soil.
- Foliage: It has bright yellow daisy-like flowers and dark green leaves.
- Generally biennial but may act perennial until it can produce seed.
- Germination Information:
 - One plant can develop as many as 200,000 seeds
 - Seeds can remain viable four to five years, or, if buried deeply enough, as many as 15 years
 - Seeds possess variable germination, dormancy and dispersal characteristics thereby having the ability to invade a wide variety of sites.
 - Spread by wind, precipitation, animals, livestock, vehicles, and humans.
 - Easily invades areas with cool, wet, cloudy weather, especially clearcut, riparian, pastures, and rangelands.

CONTROL METHODS:

Prevention – Best method is always to keep it from starting on your property in the first place.

Biological – Good method but slow. Can take five to ten years to establish large enough populations to be effective against tansy ragwort. They are not able to eradicate it, but can keep it at a manageable level. Three species are effective against tansy ragwort:

- Ragwort flea beetle (feeds on roots, crowns, and leaves)
- Ragwort seed fly (feeds within the seed head)
- Cinnabar moth (eats leaves, buds, and flowers)

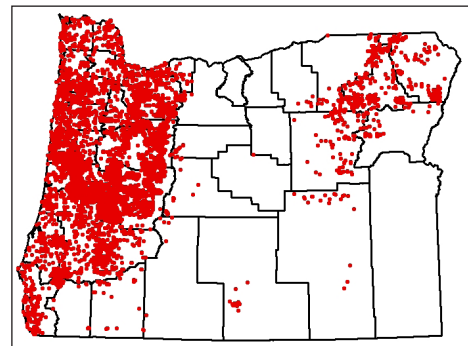
Chemical – Do not apply herbicides on forest land until you contact the Oregon Department of Forestry. Some herbicides are effective against Tansy Ragwort; contact your local Extension agent or Oregon Department of Agriculture representative for specific recommendations for your situation.

Mechanical/Manual – Only effective if you don't let it go to seed. Hand pull plants and small patches, removing all roots.

ENVIRONMENTAL / ECONOMIC IMPACTS:

- Competes with native plants
- All parts of the plant are poisonous
- Contains alkaloids which are lethal to most livestock except sheep (the alkaloids cause irreversible liver damage)
- The alkaloids can taint honey and can also be transferred through cows milk to humans.

DISTRIBUTION / SPREAD:



Map: Updated 3/08. Tansy Ragwort Invasion Map found at <http://www.weedmapper.org>

SOURCES:

Most of the information in this fact sheet is taken from the OSU Extension Service Invasive Weed – Tansy Ragwort publication off their website, except the second bullet in the basic facts section, which is from the USDA Forest Services' "Weed of the Week" flyer found at http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants