



# Common Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* L.

**Common Names:** common tansy, buttons, golden buttons

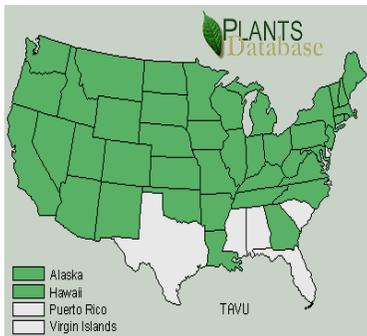
**Native Origin:** Europe; it was first introduced to North America for medicinal purposes and as an ornamental plant

**Description:** A perennial forb in the aster family (Asteraceae) growing to a height of 2 to 5 feet. Erect stems grow in clusters, causing the plant to have a bush appearance. Stems are slightly hairy, woody and purplish red near the ground. Leaves are alternate and pinnately compound with deeply divided, toothed fernlike leaflets. The leaves are 4 to 10 inches long and 1.5 to 3 inches wide and strongly scented when crushed. Yellow, daisy-like flower heads, about 1/3 inch wide, are arranged in a showy, flat-topped inflorescence at the top of the stem. Flowering occurs from July to October. Flowers produce numerous tufted a seed. Reproduction is by expansion of short rhizomes and seeds that are spread by wind and water.



Note: Common tansy is often confused with tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), a poisonous pasture weed. Tansy ragwort is non-aromatic.

It is also confused with our native tansy, Lake Huron tansy (*Tanacetum huronense*), that inhabits northern river shores, dunes, beaches, and outcrops. It is distinguished by its hairy, finely divided leaf blades, and by its larger flower heads.



**Habitat:** It grows in sandy and loamy soils of open disturbed areas, roadsides, pastures, fields, prairies, hedgerows, gardens and naturally disturbed environments, such as flood-scoured river shores. In northern Minnesota it invades on old mined-over sites.

**Distribution:** This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in MD, MN, ID, OR, WA, WI, and WY.

**Ecological Impacts:** It has escaped cultivation to invade disturbed areas by forming very dense patches that crowd out native plants. It can clog drainage ditches restricting the flow of water. It may threaten the ecological health of areas through reduction of wildlife habitat and species diversity. It is also mildly toxic. Some people have reported reactions to the oil from this plant.

## Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Can be cut, tilled or dug up; remove entire rootstock. Mow prior to flowering, repeat mowing as needed to prevent seed set.
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate. Follow label and state requirements.

**References:** <http://plants.usda.gov>, [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org), [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov), [www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/mt9911.pdf](http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/mt9911.pdf), Czarapeta, Elizabeth J., *Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest: An Illustrated Guide to their Identification and Control*, 2005. p. 116, [www.co.stevens.wa.us/weedboard/PDF\\_weed/com%20tan.pdf](http://www.co.stevens.wa.us/weedboard/PDF_weed/com%20tan.pdf), [www.fs.fed.us/r4/sawtooth/botany/weeds/commontansy.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sawtooth/botany/weeds/commontansy.htm), [www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialplants/herbaceous/commontansy.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialplants/herbaceous/commontansy.html)