



Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* L.

Other common names.—Coughwort, assfoot, horsefoot, foalfoot, bull's-foot, horsehoof, colt-herb, clayweed, cleats, dove-dock, dummyweed, ginger, gingerroot, hoofs, sowfoot, British tobacco, gowan..

Coltsfoot is a perennial herb in the Asteraceae family.

Height: Flowers grow to a height of 7.5 to 30.5 cm.

Leaves: The cordate (heart-shaped) leaves are slightly toothed, upright and the underside is whitish. They arise directly from the root with no main stem present. Individual leaves are 7.5 to 17.5 cm wide.

Flowers: Solitary flowers are dandelion-like and bright yellow in color. There are several scaly white flower stalks per plant. Flowers emerge before the leaves in early spring through June.

Seeds: brown nutlets are attached to a pappus resembling the seeds of common dandelion.

Life History: Coltsfoot is a perennial with a multi-branched rhizome. In the early spring the flower stalks emerge before the leaves. Each stalk bears a solitary flower, which opens only on sunny days. The leaves appear after the flowers have matured; the flowers and leaves are usually not seen at the same time. The flowers and leaves arise directly from the rootstock. Coltsfoot reproduces both vegetatively and sexually. The roots can remain dormant underground for long periods of time. In some cases, coltsfoot has been known to reemerge after soil disturbance, and very small fragments of roots can produce new plants.

Origin and Distribution A native of Europe, this plant was probably brought to this country by early settlers for its medicinal properties. It has spread throughout the northeastern United States from Maine to North Carolina, west to Tennessee and north to Minnesota.

Habitat Coltsfoot thrives in low-lying mesic areas including stream banks, moist field or pastures, roadsides, and disturbed areas. It can also be found in drier sites and in poor soils. It is intolerant of shade and is not commonly found in wooded areas, though it has been documented invading forests following fire.

Management Recommendations

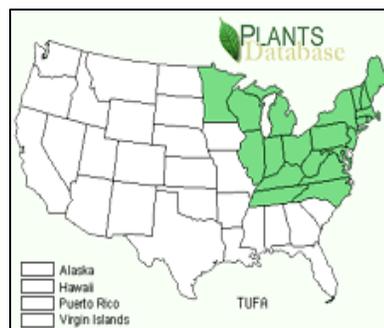
- **Mechanical Control** Initial infestations may be controlled by hand pulling to remove the entire plant.
- **Herbicidal Control** is effective on large populations or where mechanical control measures are not are impractical. Treat in summer when the leaves of coltsfoot are fully developed.



Photo by Leslie J. Mehrhoff



Photo by Ohio State Univ



Reference: www.invasive.org,
www.hort.purdue.edu

