



Tansy Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea* L.

Common Name: tansy ragwort, tansy butterweed, ragwort, stinking willie

Native Origin: Europe and western Asia

Description: Tansy ragwort is a biennial plant or short-lived perennial in the sunflower Family (*Asteraceae*). Erect purplish-red stems grow 1 to 6 feet tall. Leaves grow up the coarse stem and are 2 or 3 times pinnately lobed. The daisy-like bright yellow flower heads have disk and ray flowers up to 0.5 inch long. Seed are easily transported by wind, water and animals. One ragwort plant can produce in excess of 150,000 seeds. Seeds can lie dormant on the soil surface for 4 to 5 years or over 20 years if buried. The plant has deep tap roots.



Habitat: This is a disturbance area plant; it is found on creek bottom lands, pastures, and forest clear-cuts.

Distribution: This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in CA, OR, and WA.



Environmental Concern: Introduced to North America as a medicinal herb, tansy ragwort has invaded pastures, woodlands and waste areas. Tansy ragwort is a poisonous plant causing environmental deterioration, loss of pasture for grazing animals and death to livestock. It produces alkaloid compounds that can cause liver damage in cattle and horses. Flowers of contain the highest percentage of the toxin.

Control & Management:



- **Manual-** Don't let ragwort go to seed. Hand pull isolated plants and small patches and remove as much of the root as possible. Mow heavy infestations thoroughly. Plants mowed after flowering begins can still produce seed.
- **Chemical-** Tansy ragwort is easily controlled in the seedling to young rosette stage with the herbicide 2, 4-D as either the amine or low-volatile ester formulation. (herbicide dicamba (Banvel) or dicamba plus 2, 4-D provides excellent control) Apply herbicides in early spring or mid-fall when active new growth is occurring. Follow label and state requirements.

- **Biological Control-** Insect agents that attack the seed head, roots and leaves of ragwort make the weed less competitive and reduce seed production. These insects are the cinnabar moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*), a seed head fly (*Hylemya seneciella*) and the ragwort flea beetle (*Longitarsus jacobaeae*).



References: www.invasive.org, www.cnipm.org/senecio_jacobaea.html, <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu>, www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/tansy.htm, www.forestimages.org, <http://plants.usda.gov>, www.nps.gov/plants/alien