

What are invasive plants?

Invasive plants, or weeds, are non-native plants that threaten our native ecosystems. In Alberta, approximately fifty plants are considered to be invasive. Those bright stalks of blue flowers behind your roses or clumps of daisies by your deck may also be on Alberta's Weed Control Act regulated list - www.qp.aberta.ca.



Invasive plants are primarily spread by humans, followed by wind, water, and wildlife. No longer controlled by native diseases and insects, introduced invasive plants cause numerous ecological and economic problems, crowding out native plants as they compete for space, moisture, and nutrients.

Why do we need to be concerned about invasive plants? The Alberta Invasive Plants Council states that invasive plants displace native plants, reduce biodiversity, damage wildlife habitat, decrease land productivity, and diminish aesthetic values.

Alberta has two classifications of invasive species:

- **Prohibitive noxious** are aggressive and are found in few regions. To prevent their establishment "destruction" is required. *e.g. Spotted Knapweed and Nodding Thistle.*
- **Noxious weeds** are established in many locations. Problematic populations are "controlled." *e.g. Common Tansy and Blueweed.*



There are also many nuisance weeds that are common species found throughout Alberta. These weeds are so biologically suited to Alberta they cannot be eliminated. *e.g. Dandelion and Field Chickweed.*

To learn about weeds and their classifications in Alberta, visit [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq8261](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq8261).

The first step in managing invasive plants is to be able to identify them. The following weeds are of high concern in Crowsnest Pass. Learn how to identify these plants so we can take steps to manage them.

Invasive Ornamentals



Did you know that many of the ornamental plants that we choose for our gardens are not native to the Crowsnest Pass region or even to North America? Check your garden and see what invasive ornamentals you might be nurturing. *Examples: Creeping Bellflower, Dame's Rocket, Yellow Clematis & Wildflower Mixes.*

Management

There are a number of ways to manage invasive species: mechanical, chemical, and biological control. Hand-picking is often an effective way to manage weeds without the use of chemicals.

Be a Crowsnest Pass Land Steward! Join Crowsnest Conservation and the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass for community weed pulls throughout the summer. Make a difference in our community. Contact either office to find out about our next community conservation event!



Additional Resources

- Visit **Alberta Invasive Plants Council's** website at www.invasiveplants.ab.ca to learn more about invasive weeds, invasive ornamentals, and tips to manage weeds.
- On your next hike take **Weeds of Canada** by Royer & Dickinson (Published by Lone Pine, 1999) to identify plants in the field.

Contact Information



Valuing and connecting people and nature for a healthy future in Crowsnest Pass and beyond.

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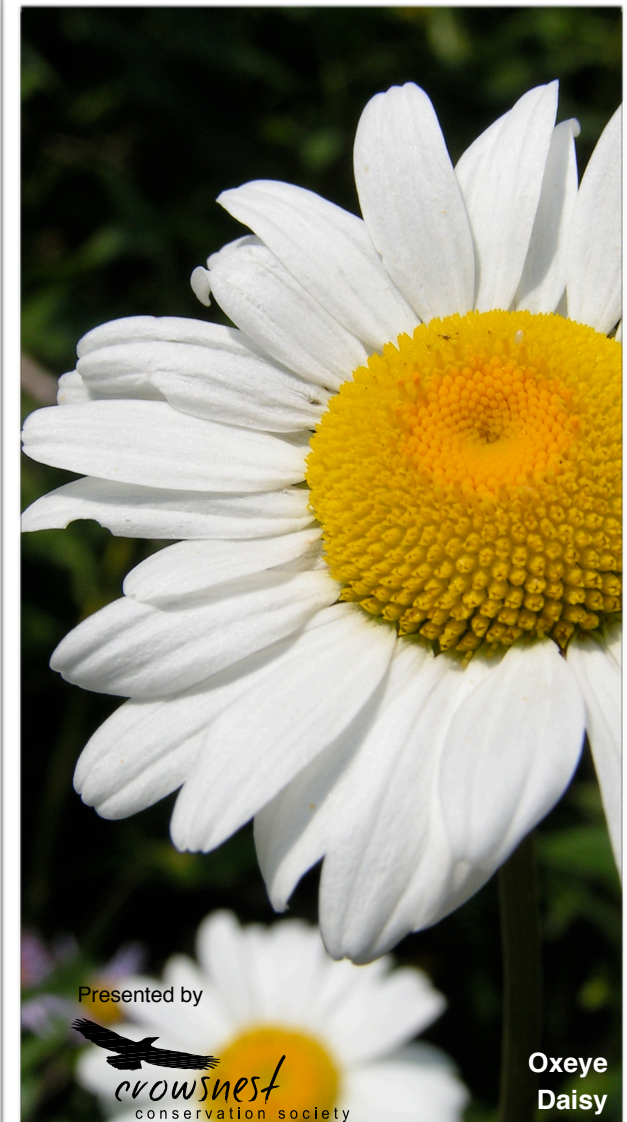
Municipality of Crowsnest Pass Weed Control Officer

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Crowsnest Pass "Most Wanted" Weeds

**What are invasive plants?
How do I identify them?
Helpful Resources**



Presented by



**Oxeye
Daisy**

Crowsnest Pass Most Wanted Weeds

Blueweed

Echium vulgare

A biennial introduced from North Africa. **Classification:** Noxious. Prefers disturbed ground and coarse, sandy and gravel surfaces. Check your yard and gravel driveway for this plant.



Leaves: In the 1st year, blueweed produces a ground-hugging rosette. Later, alternate, narrow to lance-shaped, bristly haired leaves, 1 to 15 cm long.

Flower: Blue, trumpet-shaped, 2 cm across. Flowers arranged vertically on bristly haired stalk.

Plant: Up to 1 m tall. Stout, black taproot. Several stems rise from a single taproot.

Reproduction: By fruit called nutlets. Each flower produces 4 nutlets with seeds. Each plant can produce up to 2,800 seeds.

Common Tansy

Tanacetum vulgare

A perennial introduced from Europe in the 1600s for medicinal purposes. **Classification:** Noxious. Prefers disturbed soil. Check your garden for this fern-like plant. Observed along Crowsnest River.



Leaves: Fern-like, alternate, 5 to 25 cm long and 4 to 8 cm wide. Leaves are aromatic when crushed.

Flower: Button-like heads. Flat-topped clusters of 20 to 200 heads of small yellow florets.

Plant: Up to 1.8 m tall. Hairless stems. Near ground, stems are purplish.

Reproduction: By both seeds (up to 30,000 seeds per plant!) and rhizomes (underground horizontal roots).

Common Toadflax

Linaria vulgaris

A perennial introduced from Europe in the mid-1800s as an ornamental. **Classification:** Noxious. An aggressive weed that quickly outcompetes native grasses and herbs.



Leaves: Alternate, 2 to 10 cm long and 1 to 5 mm wide. Numerous. Resembles pipe-cleaner.

Flower: Like snapdragon flowers. Yellow with an orange throat.

Plant: Up to 1.3 m tall. Often in large colonies.

Reproduction: By both seeds and extensive creeping rhizomes. Fruit is an egg-shaped capsule, 8 to 12 mm long. One plant can produce up to 8,700 seeds! 2-3 week old seedlings can produce creeping roots.

Leafy Spurge

Euphorbia esula

A perennial introduced from Europe in the 1800s as a contaminant in crop seed. **Classification:** Noxious. Tolerates various soil and moisture conditions. **Caution** - All plant parts contains a milky juice that can cause skin irritation.



Leaves: Alternate to whorled below flower cluster, 2 to 5 cm long. Numerous. Lance-shaped.

Flower: Yellowish-green cup-like structure above two green leaf-like, heart-shaped bracts. Clustered.

Plant: Up to 1 m tall. Forms dense stands. Stems somewhat woody.

Reproduction: By both seeds (up to 130,000 seeds per plant!) and rhizomes. Roots can span 4.5 m across and 9 m deep. When seeds mature, the capsule explodes and scatters seeds up to 5 m away!

Oxeye Daisy

Chrysanthemum leucanthemum

A perennial introduced from Europe in the early 1800s as a contaminant in imported grass seed. Later, spread as an ornamental plant. Look for oxeye daisies in gardens, along waterways and roadways. Often included in wildflower seed mixes. **Classification:** Noxious.



Leaves: Basal leaves are spatula-shaped, 4 to 15 cm long and 5 cm wide. Deeply lobed, smooth and glossy. Closer to the flower, leaves are smaller.

Flower: Solitary head of white daisies with yellow centres, 2 to 6 cm across.

Plant: Up to 1 m tall. Numerous stems from a single base.

Reproduction: By both seeds and rhizomes. When established, can quickly replace up to 50% of the grass in a pasture.

Spotted Knapweed

Centaurea maculosa

Biennial or short-lived perennial, introduced from Europe via BC in 1893. **Classification:** Prohibitive noxious. Often in pastures. Roots secrete chemical that inhibits root growth of other plants.



Leaves: In 1st year, produces rosette with deeply lobed leaves. Later, alternate, hairy leaves, 5 to 15 cm long. Lower leaves are divided (feather-like), upper leaves are undivided.

Flower: Pinkish-purple, up to 2.5 cm across. Bracts on the flower's bottom have black tips.

Plant: Up to 1.8 m tall. Many branches, sandpaper texture. Stem green and purple-stripped.

Reproduction: By seed only. Can self-pollinate and produce up to 140,000 seeds. In winter, dried plants break and tumble in the wind, dispersing seed.