



FACT SHEET

ORANGE HAWKWEED

(*Hieracium aurantiacum*)

- Orange hawkweed grows from a few inches to two feet in height
- The hairy stems are usually leafless.
- The lance-shaped leaves that grow at the base of the plant are hairy.
- The plants produces stolons (creeping stems), the tips of which develop into new plants.
- The flower heads are clustered at the top of the stems.
- The flowers are bright orange, similar to dandelion flowers, but smaller—about an inch in diameter.
- The seeds are black, very small, with a tuft of bristles at one end.
- The entire plant contains a milky juice.
- Sunflower family



Hawkweed stolons



LOOK ALIKES:

There are several native hawkweeds and other invasive hawkweeds, but none of them have bright orange flowers.

DISTRIBUTION:

There are several small sites of orange hawkweed in Jefferson County, mostly on highways.

WHY BE CONCERNED?

- Orange hawkweed aggressively competes with pasture species.
- It is unpalatable to livestock and crowds out more desirable species.
- It can spread and overtake other small ornamental plants.

Orange hawkweed is a Class B Noxious Weed.

Control is required in Jefferson County.

ECOLOGY:

- Orange hawkweed grows mainly in pastures and on roadsides; it needs sun.
- It is an unpalatable perennial that can reproduce by seeds, stolons (stems that produce new plants) and rhizomes (underground stems).
- Most hawkweed infestations begin by seed, but once plants are established they spread by stolons or rhizomes, and can produce dense patches.

CONTROL

Prevention and early detection are the best means of control!

- **Do not buy or plant** orange hawkweed.
- **Avoid** introducing soil or gravel from areas known to have orange hawkweed.
- **Remove** seedlings when young because they can usually be pulled easily and they have not had an opportunity to reproduce.
- **Replant** with a desirable (preferably native) plant species, to discourage reinfestation.
- **Dispose** of weeds properly, bag or burn seed heads or fragments that may resprout.

DIGGING out the rosettes will remove small infestations. Care must be taken to dig out all of the root system, since even a small piece may develop into a new plant. Dispose of all plants parts carefully.

MOWING is not an effective long-term control method because the leaves are too low-lying to be cut by the mower. Mowing can however reduce or prevent seed production by removing flower heads.

HERBICIDES can be effective, but should always be applied with care. Do not apply herbicides over or near water bodies. Read the label to check that you are applying a herbicide in the right place, to the right plant, at the right time, and in the right amount. For perennial weeds, long term control requires stopping seed production **and** attacking the weed's root system. Translocated herbicides, (ones that move throughout a plant's system) are recommended. These are most effective on young, actively growing plants because the herbicide moves around the plant more quickly. Also, herbicide is more easily absorbed by clean, new leaves.

- **Note:** Most herbicides will **NOT** prevent germination of weed seeds already in the soil, so monitoring and retreatment are necessary.

Call the Weed Board for specific herbicide advice.

Call if you see this plant.