

**WRITTEN FINDINGS OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD
(NOVEMBER 1997)**

Scientific Name: *Hieracium atratum* Fries

Common Name: polar hawkweed

Family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

Legal Status: Class B (a) regions 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10.
(b) region 5 outside the boundaries of Mt. Rainier National Park.

Description and Variation: *Hieracium atratum* is a perennial herb, without stolons. This species usually has one basal leaf still present at flowering. The leaves found along the stem can be reduced to bracts. The leaves are dentate (a few coarse teeth along the margin, with the teeth facing outward). The leaves appear mostly smooth. Polar hawkweed can range in size from 6 inches to 36 inches tall, depending on the habitat. The flowers are a yellow composite (dandelion-like), and they appear in mid to late summer.

H. atratum has black tipped glandular hairs, simple nonglandular hairs and stellate hairs present on the involucre (whorl of bracts beneath the flower) and occasionally found along the upper portion of the flowering stem and leaves. A distinguishing characteristic can be the number of black tipped glandular hair found. However, this is another species of the genus that belongs to a large complex without any clear specific boundaries.

Economic Importance:

Detrimental: Polar hawkweed is another hawkweed species that is a prolific seed producer, with the potential to hybridize with native and non-native hawkweed species.

Beneficial: None known

Habitat: Roadsides.

Geographic Distribution: *H. atratum* is of European origin. This species belongs to “widespread and taxonomically difficult groups that contain many polyploids and apomictic races (which no doubt accounts for their weediness)”. (Allen 1997).

History: *H. atratum* is related to *H. murorum*, an introduced species which is reported from B.C.. (Allen 1997). Species collected from Mt. Rainier National Park, above Longmire on the road to Paradise (Fries personal observation), at 4600' elevation. One site in Skagit County, on HWY 9, near the junction with Martin Road (3/96).

Growth and Development: Perennial

Reproduction: Seed.

Response to Herbicide: Unknown

Response to Cultural Methods: Unknown

Response to Mechanical Methods: Unknown

Biocontrol Potentials: Unknown

References:

*Allen, G.A. 1997. Personal correspondence.

*Allen, G.A. and Costanzo, B. 1997. Identification of introduced *Hieracium* (hawkweed) specimens for Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board. Partial Key to *Hieracium* of Washington State.

* *References available from the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board Office in Kent.*

Rationale for Listing:

Hieracium atratum is one species in a complex of hawkweeds that are prolific seed producers, weedy and capable of hybridizing with many exotic and probably native species. The fact that polar hawkweed is found at an elevation of 4600 feet and along I-5 in Skagit County may speak of its adaptability. At this time we only know of this species at one site outside of Mt. Rainier National Park. The limited distribution of polar hawkweed, makes it feasible to control the spread of yet another invasive hawkweed.