

WRITTEN FINDINGS OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

Scientific Name: Matricaria maritima var. agrestis

Common Name: Scentless mayweed/chamomile

Legal Name: Class C

Description and Variation: Scentless chamomile is an annual to short-lived perennial weed of the Composite family originating in Europe. The stems are erect, smooth and often much branched, growing 15 cm to 1 m in height. The leaves are alternate on the stems and very finely dissected into narrow, thread-like segments. The leaves are essentially odorless when crushed. Flowers are of two types; the white, daisy-like florets around outer margin and numerous yellow tubular flowers in the center. Bracts of the flower head are numerous and arranged in several overlapping rows. The dark brown seeds are about 2mm long, have 3 broad ribs on one side with a broad central brown area on the other. Flowering generally occurs from June to October.

Economic Importance: Can reach a height of three feet and produce biomass sufficient to prevent harvest of small grains. Kittitas County Weed District #4 has expressed concern about potential impact on production in timothy hay fields.

Geographical Distribution: Known from central Washington and is believed to have been introduced as a contaminant in seed from California.

Habitat: Roadsides, waste areas, and perennial forage crops, increasing in cultivated fields, particularly on heavy soils.

History: See Geographical Distribution

Growth and Development: annual to short-lived perennial.

Reproduction: Seed

Response to Herbicides: No information available at this time.

Response to Cultural Method: See Response to Herbicides.

Biocontrol Potentials: See Response to Herbicides.

References:

Frankton, Clarence and Gerald A. Mulligan. 1955. Weeds of Canada. New Canada Press, LTD., Toronto.

Saskatchewan Dept. of Agriculture. 1972. Scentless Chamomile Fact Sheet.

Matricaria maritima (cont.)

Hitchcock, C. Leo and Arthur Cronquist. 1972. Flora of the Pacific Northwest, University of Washington Press, Seattle.

Notes: Richard Old. 1984.

Matricaria maritima var. *agrestis* - Wilmott False Chamomile - This species has been reported from the Union Flat area of Whitman County since 1977, where it appeared to be primarily a weed of roadshoulders. It has since spread throughout the Colton, Uniontown area and is common near Genesee, Idaho. *M. maritima* can reach a height of three feet and produce biomass sufficient to prevent harvest of small grains. It poses an unusual threat in that its spread is going unnoticed, since to the untrained eye it appears to be *Anthemis arvensis* (Dog fennel or Mayweed), a common weed species in this area. *M. maritima* has also been reported recently from several introductions in central Washington where it appears to have been introduced as a containment in seed from California. I believe this species poses a considerable future threat to agriculture in central and eastern Washington and that a program focusing on awareness and control or eradication should be instigated while it is still limited in scope.