



# Ada County



MAY 2012

## Pest of the Month

**A quick guide to identifying and controlling invasive plants and animals found in the county**

### HOARY ALYSSUM

**Hoary alyssum** is a member of the mustard family and is an annual to short-lived perennial forb native to east-central Europe and western Asia. It has a slender tap root, star-shaped hairs on the stems, leaves, sepals, and seed pods, and four white, notched petals on flowers clustered at the stem tips. It is invasive along roads, railroads, trails, and gravelly stream and lake banks, in lawns, farmyards, vacant lots, overgrazed pastures and rangeland, and in hay meadows.

Seeds can germinate from early spring to late fall, limited mainly by open space and water. Seedlings establishing in early July or sooner can flower and produce seed by early fall. Seedlings establishing in late July or later will remain as rosettes and produce flowers and seeds the following year.



#### Quick Facts



Hoary alyssum is toxic to horses causing laminitis, limb edema, diarrhea, intravascular haemolysis, and hypovolemic shock.

Hoary alyssum decreases forage value because the woody stems of mature plants are low in crude protein and digestible carbohydrates.

The ability of hoary alyssum to persist under dry conditions and its continuous flowering and fruiting enables it to compete with native plants on range and wildlands and reduce biodiversity.

Hoary alyssum is adapted to the temperate continental climate characterized by cold winters and hot dry summers, but is found throughout much of the US.

Fall seedlings and rosettes are resistant to winterkill, and flowering plants are resistant to summer drought.

*See control methods on other side...*

## How to Control

### Control Methods:

Hoary alyssum is controlled using 2, 4-D applied at label rates. Spring applications when plants are actively growing and prior to bolting will be most effective. Repeated applications will be needed to target plants regenerating from the seed bank.

Reports indicate metsulfuron applied at 0.5 ounce product per acre will control hoary alyssum. Other sulfonyleurea herbicides including chlorsulfuron, and trisulfuron products as well as dicamba, and imazapic products may also be effective.

Hand pulling that removes the root crown is effective.

Mowing will not control hoary alyssum and may increase infestations by cutting down a shading canopy and spreading seed pods. Regular, repeated mowing to a six-inch stubble height may reduce seed production when combined with irrigation and nutrient management to increase the vigor of desired plants.

Shallow tilling that severs the tap root below the root crown will kill hoary alyssum plants. However, this type of disturbance will favor hoary alyssum regeneration from the seed bank.

There are no biological control insects available for management of hoary alyssum.

**Source:** United States Department of Agriculture / Natural Resources Conservation Service



**Note:** Chemical control of any weed can be difficult and confusing. If you are not experienced in chemical control or do not understand the product label, you should consult a licensed applicator to assist you. Inappropriate application can kill desirable vegetation, and may violate federal law.



For questions and concerns, please contact:

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