

Common Tansy

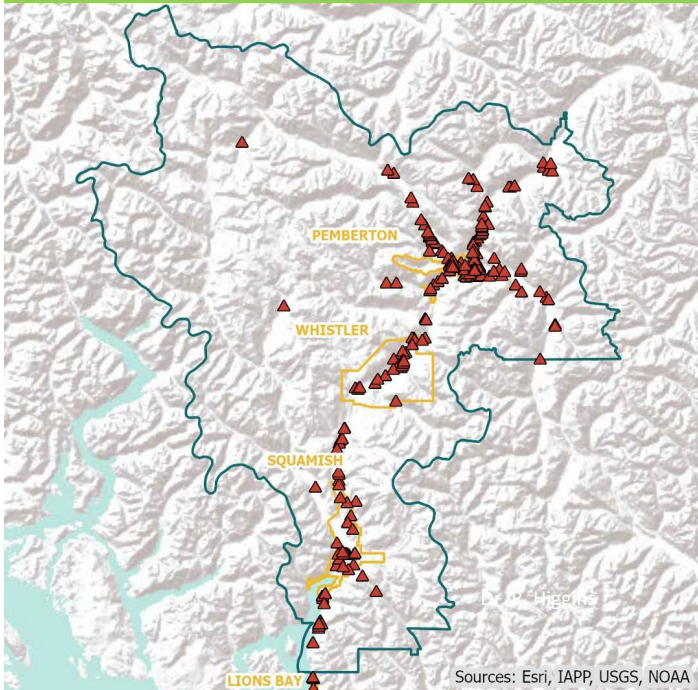
Tanacetum vulgare

AKA Garden Tansy

FACT SHEET

Squamish: Strategic Control | Whistler: Strategic Control | Pemberton: Strategic Control

DISTRIBUTION



Origin: Common Tansy is native to Europe, Asia and Siberia, where its aromatic foliage has been used for centuries for repelling insects and treating ailments. It was transported to North America for ornamental and medicinal purposes during the 17th century.

Habitat: Common Tansy thrives in dry areas with full sun and well-drained, fertile soils; it also grows well in wet, coastal habitats. It is often found in newly-disturbed sites, river banks, riparian habitats, pastures, and along roadsides. Common Tansy, however, has difficulty growing in frequently cultivated soil.

Reproduction: Common Tansy reproduces by seed as well as vegetatively, from roots and creeping rhizomes. Common Tansy can form new plants from broken root fragments. One plant can produce up to 50,000 seeds in a season, and seeds can remain viable in the soil for 25 years.

IDENTIFICATION



D. Steers

Common Tansy is a perennial forb and a member of the Daisy family (Asteraceae).

Flowers: Common Tansy flowers are button-like, yellow, aromatic, and lack petals. The flowers occur in dense, flat-topped clusters at the top of the stems. A single plant contains 20 - 200 flower heads.

Stems: Are branched, purplish-red when mature and dotted with glands. Common Tansy can grow up to 1.8 m tall with each plant containing multiple stems.

Leaves: Are dark green, deeply lobed, and finely divided with serrated leaflets. The 10 - 20 cm long and 4 - 8 cm wide leaves are arranged alternately along the stem, becoming smaller towards the top of the plant. Common Tansy leaves are fern-like and strongly aromatic when crushed.

Seeds: Are yellow-brown, 1 mm long achenes with short, five-toothed crowns, and are dotted with glands.

Roots: Grow horizontally from the rootstock.

Similar Species:

- **Invasive:** Tansy Ragwort (*Jacobea vulgaris*), St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). Common Tansy lacks ray flowers (petals) that are present in these species.

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Vectors of Spread: Common Tansy is spread by trade, as it is still sold by plant nurseries and herbal remedy suppliers. Its seeds can be transported by animals, water, wind, and by vehicles when they leave infested areas.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Common Tansy is found in communities the Sea to Sky Region, so PREVENTION of further spread is key:

- Regularly monitor properties for weed infestations.
- Ensure soil and gravel are uncontaminated before transport.
- Don't unload, park, or store equipment or vehicles in infested areas; remove plant material from any equipment, vehicles, or clothing used in such areas and wash equipment and vehicles at designated cleaning sites before leaving infested areas.
- Minimize soil disturbances (e.g. use grazing plans that prevent soil exposure from overgrazing), and use seed mixes with dense, early colonization (e.g. alfalfa or barley) to re-vegetate exposed soil and resist invasion.
- Ensure plants (particularly flowering heads or root fragments) are bagged or covered to prevent spread during transport to designated disposal sites (e.g. landfill). **Do not compost.**

Common Tansy can be controlled by:

- **Mechanical Control:** Small infestations can be hand-pulled, but we recommend wearing gloves and protective clothing, as Common Tansy can cause skin irritation. Mowing is not an effective control method, as the plant will respond with an increase in vegetative growth. However, mowing sites very low to the ground early in the season (before July) can prevent seed production.
- **Chemical Control:** Metsulfuron methyl and aminopyralid provide effective control for Common Tansy. Picloram, alone or combined with 2,4-D, is also effective, but it is not suitable for wet, coastal soils. We recommend that any herbicide application is carried out by a person holding a valid BC Pesticide Applicator Certificate. Before selecting and applying herbicides, you must review and follow herbicide labels and application rates; municipal, regional, provincial and federal laws and regulations; species-specific treatment recommendations, and site-specific goals and objectives.
- **Biological Control:** No biocontrol agent is currently available in BC. British Columbia is part of a consortium conducting research on possible biocontrols, including a stem-mining weevil (*Microplontus millefollii*); a shoot and flowerhead-mining moth (*Platyptilia ochrodactyla*) and a leaf-feeding chrysomelid (*Chrysolina eurina*).

If you suspect you have found Common Tansy anywhere in the Sea to Sky region:

Contact the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council to report and for the most recent, up to date control methods. All reports will be kept confidential.

References: Alberta Invasive Species Council, Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, BC Government, Invasive Species Council of Manitoba, Invasive Species Council of BC, King Country, Nature Conservancy Canada, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board.

IMPACTS

Ecological:

- Contains alkaloids that are toxic for humans and livestock.
- Outcompetes and crowds out native species.
- Displaces desirable forage in pastures.
- Can restrict water flow when growing along watercourses.

Economic:

- Taints the honey of foraging bees.
- Reduces butterfat production and causes unpleasant tasting milk in cattle.



L. Scott



REPORT SIGHTINGS

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