

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard

Crepis tectorum L.

Alternate Names

annual hawksbeard, yellow hawksbeard

Description

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is an annual plant that can reach a height of 3 feet.

The mature plant has a single stem that is branched, erect, hairless, and leafy and grows from a taproot. Basal leaves are stalked, lance-shaped, 4–6 inches long, and 1½ inches wide. Stem leaves are alternate and less than ½ of an inch wide, and they clasp the stem. Leaf margins often roll under towards the midrib. Involucral bracts are smooth, lacking hairs or fuzz. Flowerheads are ½–¾ of an inch wide and composed of 30–70 yellow ray florets. The seedheads look like small dandelion seedheads, with a white pappus of numerous white bristles on each seed.



Narrowleaf hawksbeard flowers.

USDA Forest Service photo by
Michael Shephard

Similar Species

Invasive narrow-leaved hawkweed (*Hieracium umbellatum* L., included in this book) is often confused with narrowleaf hawksbeard. Narrow-leaved hawkweed is an erect perennial plant with numerous yellow flowerheads up to 1 inch across. The floral bracts are dark green to black. Seeds are about ¼ of an inch long and have a brownish or tawny pappus. Smooth hawksbeard (*Crepis capillaris* (L.) Wallr.) is another exotic species in Alaska that can only be differentiated from narrowleaf hawksbeard by magnification. The two native *Crepis* species can be distinguished from the exotics by their smaller stature, often growing less than 1 foot high.

Ecological Impact

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is a weed of forage crops, pastures, roadsides, and waste areas. It is occasionally a serious weed in fall-sown crops (Royer and Dickinson 1999). Aesthetic impacts are significant because the plants are showy and conspicuous when in flower.



KULAK photo by Paul Brusselen

Smooth hawksbeard.

Biology and Invasive Potential

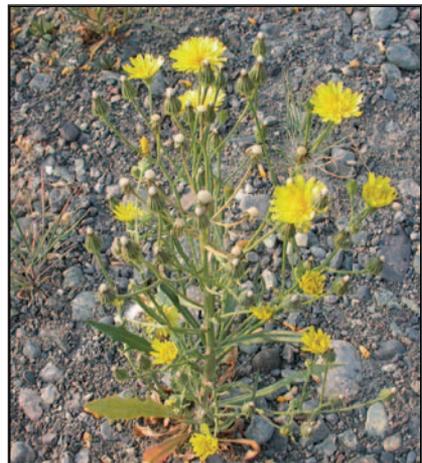
Each narrowleaf hawksbeard plant is capable of producing over 49,000 seeds (Royer and Dickinson 1999), and it readily colonizes disturbed sites and open areas (Densmore et al. 2001). Seeds are wind-dispersed and no dormant period is required for germination. It is listed as noxious in Minnesota, Alberta, and Manitoba.

Distribution and Abundance

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is primarily limited to cultivated fields, roadsides, and waste areas. It is native to Europe and temperate Asia. The species is now found throughout Canada and the northern part of the United States (Royer and Dickinson 1999), including a number of locations across Alaska. The first documented occurrence in the state was near Fairbanks in 1974 (ALA 2004).

Management

Narrowleaf hawksbeard is easily pulled up by hand, although several weedings may be necessary to eliminate plants overlooked when they were in the small rosette stage or not yet flowering (Densmore et al. 2001). It can also be controlled by mechanical or chemical methods.



USDA Forest Service photo by Michael Shephard

Narrowleaf hawksbeard.

Family: Asteraceae

Narrowleaf Hawksbeard

Notes

The genus name *Crepis* comes from the Greek krepis, “a sandal,” and is an ancient plant name. The species name *tectorum* means “of roofs.”



UAF Cooperative Extension Service
photo by Michael Rasy

Narrowleaf hawksbeard.