

Alsike Clover

Trifolium hybridum L.

Alternate Names

Ladino clover, Dutch clover

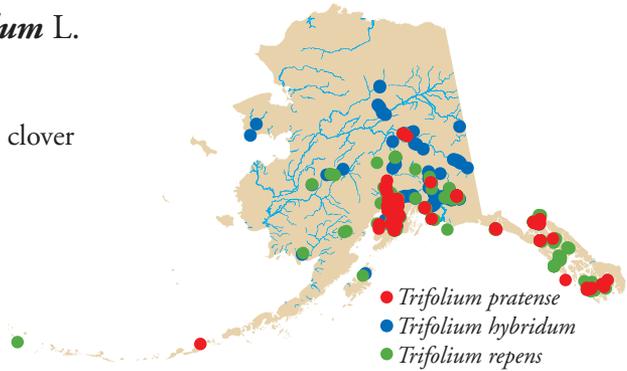
Related Species

White clover

Trifolium repens L.

Red clover

Trifolium pratense L.



Description

Alsike clover is a perennial plant that grows 6–20 inches high with stems that are ascending to erect and do not root at the nodes. Leaves are palmately trifoliate with obovate or ovate to elliptic leaflets. Flowerheads have many flowers that are white to pink to reddish. This is the only white to pink-flowered clover in Alaska that has erect stems and does not root at the nodes.

Red clover is a perennial plant that grows up to 3 feet high and has large, palmately trifoliate leaves with distinctive “chevrons” and large reddish flowerheads.

White clover is a prostrate perennial plant. The stems are up to 2 feet long, and they root at the nodes. Leaves are alternate and palmately trifoliate with ovate leaflets. Flowers are white to pinkish-white



Alsike clover.

USDA Forest Service photo by Tom Heutte



Red clover.

XID Services photo by Richard Old

and appear in terminal globe-shaped clusters. Seeds are tiny and round. White clover is the only decumbent white to pink-flowered clover in Alaska.

Similar species

Hultén (1968) describes a number of other introduced *Trifolium* species that occur at isolated locations in Alaska. One native species, *T. wormskjoldii* Lehm., is reported from southern Southeast Alaska and can be distinguished from red clover by the presence of a hairless calyx and umbrella-shaped rather than spherical to egg-shaped flowerheads.

Management

Clover populations are widespread and dense along roadsides in Alaska. It would be virtually impossible to eradicate these species from the state. The priority should be to keep them from colonizing new sites and to report occurrences in undisturbed habitats or remote locations. Hand-pulling can be effective for controlling small infestations, although digging may also be required where plants are well established or for white clover. Several herbicides can be used to control clovers.

Notes

The species name *hybridum* for alsike clover refers to the fact that this species is a cross between white and red clover. All 3 of these species have an extensive list of medicinal uses, although the most common use is as pasture cover or in seed mixes for roadside revegetation.



White clover.