Tanacetum vulgare L.

Common tansy

Family: Asteraceae
Range: Most contiguous states, including every western state.
Habitat: Disturbed places, gardens, yards, roadsides, fence rows, pastures, waste places, forest clearings, and meadows.
Origin: Native to temperate Eurasia. Brought to the U.S. for horticultural and medicinal reasons.
Impacts: Heavy consumption could be dangerous to humans and livestock because the plant's volatile oil contains thujone, a substance that can cause convulsions and miscarriages, as well as skin irritation. Common tansy has low palatability and livestock poisoning is rare. It frequently spreads following intensive grazing and soil disturbance. Dense stands reduce production of forage for livestock and wildlife. Infestations are problematic when trying to restore disturbed sites to desirable vegetation.
Western states listed as Noxious Weed: Colorado, Montana, Washington, Wyoming
California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) Inventory: Moderate Invasiveness

Common tansy is an erect, aromatic perennial to 5 ft tall. The foliage is glandular, glabrous to sparsely hairy. Dense clumps of stems are sometimes weakly woody. The leaves are alternate, deeply pinnate-lobed, sessile or short-stalked, evenly dotted with flat or sunken glands. Primary divisions of the leaves are narrow, mostly 4 to 10 paired. Secondary divisions are narrow and toothed. Creeping roots are thick, extensive, with numerous lateral roots. New shoots from creeping roots emerge close to the parent plant forming dense clumps.

Common tansy is easily recognized by the flat-topped clusters of small, button-like yellow flowers. Plants can produce more than 2,000 seeds. Plants reproduce primarily by seed, but also can spread by creeping roots. Seeds mainly disperse short distances by falling to the ground beneath the parent plant. There is no information on seed viability and longevity; however, in one study 75% of seeds collected in fall germinated after 1 month of cold stratification, indicating high viability.

NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, disking)	With small infestations hand-pulling is feasible, especially when soils are moist. Wear gloves when hand-pulling to avoid contact dermatitis from oily foliage. Revisit the site to pull any resprouts. Hoeing and shallow cultivation are not effective at killing existing plants since plants resprout from root fragments. Mowing will not kill established plants, but reports suggest mowing shortly before bloom can reduce seed production. Mowing can be used to reduce litter cover before herbicide application. Tillage can spread root fragments with regenerative buds. Common tansy is not normally a problem in cultivated crop fields, thus frequent tillage over an extended time will likely reduce competitiveness.
Cultural	Common tansy is toxic in large quantities and abortions in cattle have been reported in mid-west states. In Montana, most classes of livestock and some wildlife have been observed grazing common tansy with no known adverse effects. Sheep and goats can eat significant amounts of common tansy without toxic effects. Sheep have been used to manage common tansy in Montana. Clipping data suggest sheep may consume up to 90% of common tansy aboveground biomass while consuming similar quantities of perennial grasses. Overgrazing promotes common tansy in pastures. Prescribed burning is not effective. Following fire, common tansy can quickly resprout from root buds not affected by heat. Prescribed burning can be used to reduce litter cover before herbicide application. Promoting competitive vegetation can slow the spread of common tansy.

Biological	A biological control effort was launched in 2006, but no biological control agents are available to date.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

The following specific use information is based on published papers and reports by researchers and land managers. Other trade names may be available, and other compounds also are labeled for this weed. Directions for use may vary between brands; see label before use. Herbicides are listed by mode of action and then alphabetically. The order of herbicide listing is not reflective of the order of efficacy or preference.

GROWTH REGULATORS	
2,4-D Several names	**Rate:** 1 to 2 qt product/acre (0.95 to 1.9 lb a.e./acre) **Timing:** Postemergence, to rapidly growing plants before flowering. **Remarks:** 2,4-D gives best results with wiper applications. It provides only partial control in most university trials. 2,4-D is broadleaf-selective and is safe on most grasses. It has minimal soil activity. Do not apply ester formulation when outside temperatures exceed 80°F.
Aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron *Perspective*	**Rate:** 4.75 to 8 oz product (*Perspective*)/acre **Timing:** Postemergence. Most effective when applied to plants in the flower bud stage. **Remarks:** *Perspective* provides broad-spectrum control of many broadleaf species. Although generally safe for grasses, it may suppress or injure certain annual and perennial grass species. Do not treat in the root zone of desirable trees and shrubs. Do not apply more than 11 oz product/acre per year. At this high rate, cool-season grasses will be damaged, including bluebunch wheatgrass. Not yet labeled for grazing lands. Add an adjuvant to the spray solution. This product is not approved for use in California and some counties of Colorado (San Luis Valley).
Aminopyralid + metsulfuron *Opensight*	**Rate:** 2.5 to 3.3 oz product/acre **Timing:** Postemergence, when plants are at bud or later. **Remarks:** Not registered for use in California.
Aromatic amino acid inhibitors	
Glyphosate *Roundup, Accord XRT II*, and others	**Rate:** 1 to 2 qt product (*Roundup ProMax*)/acre (1.1 to 2.25 lb a.e./acre). Spot treatment, 1.5% v/v solution. Wiper treatment: 33 to 50% of concentrated product. **Timing:** Postemergence, to rapidly growing plants before flowering. **Remarks:** Best results occur with wiper applications. Glyphosate will not kill seeds or inhibit germination the following season. Glyphosate has no soil activity and is nonselective. It can create bare ground conditions that make the area susceptible to weed recruitment. In areas with desirable vegetation, use spot treatment. Glyphosate is a good control option if reseeding is planned shortly after application, as it will not injure seedlings emerging after application. Add a surfactant or methylated seed oil when using a formulation where it is not already included (e.g., *Rodeo*, *Aquamaster*).
BRANCHED-CHAIN AMINO ACID INHIBITORS	
Chlorsulfuron *Telar*	**Rate:** 1 to 2.6 oz product/acre (0.75 to 1.95 oz a.i./acre) **Timing:** Postemergence at flower bud stage. **Remarks:** Most established perennial grasses are tolerant. Always use a surfactant.
Metsulfuron *Escort*	**Rate:** 1 to 2 oz product/acre (0.6 to 1.2 oz a.i./acre) **Timing:** Postemergence at flower bud stage. **Remarks:** Metsulfuron is an effective treatment for common tansy control. Always use a surfactant. Other premix formulations of metsulfuron can be used at similar application timing. These include *Cimarron Max* (metsulfuron + dicamba + 2,4-D), *Opensight* (metsulfuron + aminopyralid) and *Cimarron X-tra* (metsulfuron + chlorsulfuron). Metsulfuron is not registered for use in California.

RECOMMENDED CITATION: DiTomaso, J.M., G.B. Kyser et al. 2013. *Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States*. Weed Research and Information Center, University of California. 544 pp.