

Noxious Weeds of Summit Park



Many people understand the importance of controlling weeds, such as fire prevention, preserving biodiversity, preventing pets from getting burrs and visual value of native flowers rather than weeds. But often, people are unsure of which plants are weeds and how to identify them. This factsheet will help you to identify and control the noxious weeds most commonly found in Summit Park.



Dyers Woad (*Isatis tinctoria*):

Identify: Dyer's Woad starts as a rosette and grows 1-4 feet tall. A single flowering stalk forms in the summer with many branches at the top ending with cross shaped, 4 petal, yellow flowers. Leaves are bluish green with fine hairs and have a cream to white midline.

Control: Hand pulling and digging by shovel are effective for smaller patches. Repeat mowing can help prevent seed production, but larger patches are best controlled with herbicide.



Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*):

Identify: Garlic Mustard grows to 3-6 ft. tall with clusters of small, white 4-petaled flowers. Leaves of rosette are rounded, kidney-shaped with toothed edges and no hairs. Upper leaves on mature plants are more triangular and smaller. Plants usually smell like garlic, especially when leaves are crushed.

Control: Garlic Mustard is difficult to control once established, so the best control is to pull it as soon as you see it. Hand-pulling is effective if the entire root is removed. Put flowering or seeding plants in the garbage. Herbicide may be needed for large, dense infestations and should be applied to spring seedlings or fall plants. After pulling or spraying larger patches, covering the area with mulch can help reduce seed germination.



Hoary Cress or Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*):

Identify: Hoary cress is a perennial that grows up to 3 feet tall. Leaves are grayish-green, lightly hairy, up to 4 inches long, and are shaped like arrowheads. Flowers are white with 4 petals. Seed pods are heart-shaped.

Control: Hoary Cress can be controlled with hand removal of the entire plant within about 10 days of germination for 3-4 years. For larger patches, herbicide may be necessary. Mowing will not kill Hoary Cress, but if you can not remove the plants in one season, mowing will prevent seeding. Do not use grazing for this plant. The weed contains chemicals that can be toxic to cattle.



Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*):

Houndstongue makes a chemical toxic to livestock and prevents other plants from growing.

Identify: Houndstongue starts as a rosette and develops a flowering stalks of up to 4ft. tall, with alternating leaves. The plant is covered with soft hairs and lower leaves can be 12in. long and 3in. wide. Flowers grow along nodding stems off the primary stem and are dark red, bell-shaped with five petals.

Control: Hand pull or remove with a shovel for small patches. Be sure to cut the taproot 2in. below the soil surface. If flowers or burs are present on plants when removed, plant should be thrown in the trash. Seeds stuck to clothing or pets should be thrown in the trash. Larger patches can be managed with herbicides.

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Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvensis*):

Identify: Canada Thistle grows to 2-5ft. tall and has slender stems that branch only at the top. Flower form in clusters at the branch tips and are purple to pink and sometimes white. Bracts found just under the flower petals are spine tipped. Leaves are lance to narrowly oval shaped with smooth to spiny edges. Hairs may or may not be present, but are usually on the underside of the leaf.

Control: This slender thistle is difficult to control because it stores large amounts of resources for regrowth in its root mass. The key to killing it is to wear out these stored resources by stressing the plant repeatedly over many years. Hand pulling, mowing, covering plants with dark tarps or sheets of metal or wood and herbicide are all effective ways to stress the plant out.



Musk Thistle or Nodding Thistle (*Carduus nutans*):

Identify: The lower leaves of Musk Thistle have a wide, white mid-vein, whitish leaf edges, a smooth waxy surface and yellowish to white spines at the tips. Leaves and stems are painfully spiny. Flowers are red/pink to purple and larger than other thistles (2 in. diameter). Mature plants range in height from 1½ to 6ft. tall, and have multi-branched stems.

Control: Since Musk Thistle only reproduces by seed and is biennial, destruction of plants prior to seeding is an effective means of control. Digging up of plants or mowing before flowers form can kill the plant. All flowers and seed-heads should be thrown in the trash. Herbicide applied on rosettes in the late fall or early spring may be more practical for large patches.



Scotch Thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*):

How to Identify: Scotch Thistle has a winged stem and can be greater than 8ft. tall and 6ft. wide. Flowers are globe shaped, pink to purple in color with a base covered in tiny, sharp bracts. Leaves can be 2ft. long and 1ft. wide with sharp, yellow spines. The leaves and often the whole stem can appear gray/white-green due to a thick mat of cotton-like hairs.

Control: Scotch Thistle can be control by digging plants up. Mowing or grazing with goats will help prevent seed production. The thistle is an annual to biennial so individual plants will dye naturally within 2 years, so preventing seeding is important. Herbicide may be more practical for very large populations.



Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*):

Bull Thistle is not a listed noxious weed, however, is painfully spinney and can spread like other noxious thistles. It is a dark green, darker than other thistles with leaves that come to a narrow, knife shape towards the ends. The whole plants appears covered in hairs and thorns. This is a biennial thistle that is best controlled by digging up the plant or mowing just before flower development.

For more information:

<http://www.co.summit.ut.us/155/Department-Of-Weeds>

<http://www.co.summit.ut.us/DocumentCenter/View/113>

<http://www.usu.edu/weeds/management/manage.html>

Or email Sara Jo Dickens at ecologybridge@gmail.com