



Noxious and Invasive Weed Program - <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/weedcontrol>

Prohibited Noxious Weeds

Grecian Foxglove – *Digitalis lanata* Ehrh.

Noxious Weed Classification – Grecian foxglove is listed as a Prohibited – Eradicate noxious weed in Minnesota. Species on the state eradicate list are either not known to be in Minnesota at this time, but are a threat to become established, or are found in localized populations. If Grecian foxglove is found in Minnesota, eradication efforts will be coordinated between landowners and state, county and local governments to destroy the above and belowground growth of this plant and prevent the maturation and dispersal of its propagating parts.

Origin – Native to Europe

Impacts – Grecian foxglove is an invasive plant that has displaced native vegetation where it becomes established. All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans and



Flowers

livestock in both fresh and dried forms. Cardiac glycosides from the plant affect cardiovascular, neurologic, and gastrointestinal systems of most mammals if ingested or absorbed through direct contact with the skin and in some cases can be fatal. Smoke from burning parts of this plant may also adversely affect humans and other mammals. **Use extreme caution around this plant and always wear protective clothing and gloves if attempting to eradicate.**

Description – A perennial species that emerges from seed as a rosette in the first year and produces a single flowering stalk in the second and subsequent years. Rosettes consist of a dense clump of spear-shaped leaves that may be rounded or pointed at the ends. Flowering stalks are unbranched, purple or brown in appearance, and grow 2-5 feet tall with many showy white to pale yellow flowers arranged in an elongated cluster along the top 1/3 of the stem. Leaves are simple, alternate, oblong to

lanceolate, with a pointed tip and smooth margins. Flowers are tubular and bell shaped with distinguishing purple-brownish venation as well as a long broad bottom lip. Flowering stems and calyxes are covered with woolly hairs. Seeds are produced in small hooked pods that can easily attach to clothing or fur and be transported long distances by humans or animals. Grecian foxglove is often mistaken for common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) and the common garden foxglove (*D. purpurea*). Common mullein grows much taller, has large spear-like leaves that are covered in hairs, and has bright non-tubular yellow flowers. Garden foxglove looks similar to Grecian foxglove but lacks woolly hairs on the stem and flower calyx, in addition to exhibiting a more diverse range of flower colors.



Habitat – Grecian foxglove is highly adaptable and has been found in sites that range from hot, dry sites in the Mediterranean to cool, high altitude sites in the Himalayas. In Minnesota and Kansas, this species invades open sunny roadsides, trails, residential yards, pastures, river bluffs, and forest margins.

Distribution in Minnesota – Grecian foxglove has been identified in Dakota, Wabasha and Washington Counties. The largest populations have been located in Washington County along the St. Croix River bluff near Afton and Stillwater.

Reporting Infestations – if you identify Grecian foxglove, contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture by calling the “Arrest the Pest hotline at 651-201-6684 (Twin Cities metro area) or 1-888-545-6684 (toll free) or contact Monika Chandler with the MDA’s Terrestrial Invasive Plant Early Detection program: 651-201-6537, monika.chandler@state.mn.us Please be prepared to provide the specific location and approximate size of the infestation.

You can also report infestations to your County Agricultural Inspector or Designated Employee: <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/weedcontrol/cailist.aspx>

For more information: <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/badplants/foxglove.aspx>