

PNW IPC Invasive Plant Focus for February and March 2008



Botanical Name – *Hypericum perforatum*L.

Common Name – common St. Johnswort, Klamath weed

Family – Clusiaceae

Duration/ growth form – perennial, herbaceous/forb

Native Range – Europe, western Asia and N Africa

Description – Erect, usually .3 to 1 meter tall, root crown and stems woody at base, many branched. Leaves-small, 1.5-3cm, with tiny clear spots, veined, elliptic to oblong. Flowers deep yellow, 5 petals with black spots, in terminal clusters, 2cm diameter. Fruit, a capsule, 3.5-5.5 mm long, seeds brown-1 mm long. Tap root extend down 1.5 meters.

Threats – In the PNW, St. Johnswort is found throughout British Columbia, SE Alaska, Washington, Oregon and most of United States. It is a noxious or regulated weed in eight states. This species contains a toxic pigment, hypericin, causing skin to become hypersensitive to sunlight. Cattle, sheep and horses are impacted, and goats to a lesser degree. Poisoning takes place when eating fresh or dried plants and some victims may die of starvation from secondary infections.

Background – *Hypericum perforatum* was first introduced on the east coast in 1793, and was found in the western states by the early 1900's. By 1940, over two million hectares were infested in the west.

Biology – This species is typically associated with disturbed sites. It is a facultative apomict, with sexual reproduction via both self and cross pollination. The number of seeds per plant are variable, about 15,000 to 34,000 and dispersed by wind, water, animals and humans, both intentionally and unintentionally. Seed viability is variable, usually six to ten years. Asexual reproduction takes place from root fragments, crown and lateral root sprouting via rhizomes and stolons.

Take a look at the Plant Assessment Form –

<http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/PAF/Hypericum%20perforatum.pdf>

Other links for *Hypericum perforatum*L. (common St. Johnswort)

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/forb/hyperper/all.html>

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=HYPE>

<http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/stjohnswort.shtml>

http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/Hypericum_perforatum.html

<http://www.caf.wvu.edu/~forage/library/poisonous/page26.htm>

http://akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu/pdfs/species_bios_pdfs/Species_bios_HYPE.pdf

References Link