

Wednesday
August 6th,
2025

Weed Wednesday

Foothills County

Issue #4



Yellow Toadflax- *Linaria vulgaris* Designation- Noxious

Introduced over 100 years ago from Europe, yellow toad flax was once an ornamental plant that escaped from our gardens into nature. It is a perennial that can adapt to a wide range of growing conditions but prefers sandy-gravelly soils.

Yellow toadflax is hairless, typically unbranched and can range in height from 15cm to 1 m tall. The leaves are lance shaped, arranged mainly alternate but may appear opposite due to crowding on the lower stem. Its bright yellow flowers are alternately arranged in a dense spike and have a long spur at the base of the flower.



When not in flower, yellow toadflax looks similar to leafy spurge, another invasive species.



Mature yellow toadflax plants can produce up to 30,000 seeds annually and seeds can be viable for up to 10 years in the soil.

Yellow toadflax is a prolific seed producer but has very low germination rates. It primarily spreads through its creeping root system (rhizomes). It can form large colonies that crowd out other vegetation and seedlings as old as 2-3 weeks can produce creeping roots.

It is an aggressive competitor for light, water and nutrients allowing it to out compete desirable vegetation. When purchasing wildflower mixes, it may be listed as spurred snapdragon. Make sure to check scientific names and confirm that there are no invasive species before planting wildflower mixes.

Once established in dense patches, multiple control methods must be used for several years to provide the best success in controlling it. Repeated cultivation can destroy the root system, but equipment should be cleaned after. Mowing can help to starve the root system and thorough hand pulling is effective where the roots can be removed. These methods must be repeated to deplete the seed bank and root pieces. Amitrole, Dichlorprop, Diuron, Glyphosate and more chemicals are registered for use on toadflax. Always check product labels to ensure the herbicide is registered for use on the target plant and don't hesitate to reach out to agricultural services for more information.

Yellow Toadflax is also called Common Toadflax, butter-and-eggs or spurred snapdragon.

If you would like more information, please contact Kathleen at Kathleen.mchugh@foothillscountyab.ca or at 403-603-5409.

References- [N_FS-CommonToadflax.pdf](#)