



# Ada County Pest of the Month

A quick guide to identifying and controlling invasive plants and animals found in the county



## Quick Facts



- **Name:** Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*)
- **Found:** Ada County
- **Briefly:** Houndstongue is also commonly known as *sheep bur*, *dog bur*, *wool mat*, and - most appropriately - *Velcro weed* because of the plant's hooked seeds that attach like Velcro to animal fur and people's clothing.
- **Houndstongue can be TOXIC to livestock. If consumed, poisons attack the liver and produce neurological affects.**

## Identification

Houndstongue is a biennial or short-lived perennial that grows up to three feet tall. In the first year it forms basal leaves that can grow up to 12 inches long. The basal leaves are narrow, lance-shaped, hairy and slightly rough to the touch. In this stage it looks like a furry Hosta plant.

In the plant's second year it grows reddish-purple five-lobed flowers in the upper leaf axils. From those flowers will form four triangular seeds with the hooked, Velcro-like prickles.

Houndstongue grows in open disturbed moist places, along roadsides or trails, in pastures and in wet grasslands.



## How To Control



The best way to control Houndstongue is to make sure you aren't carrying seeds from one area to another. Remove all weed seeds from your pet's fur, your clothing, shoes, camping gear, vehicle and/or tire treads. Put the seeds in a sealed plastic bag and throw it in the trash.

Please avoid traveling or recreating near Houndstongue infestations!

***More control methods continue on the next page***

# Control...Continued



It's important to get early control of Houndstongue found on your property. In the first year of growth (pictured to the left), the taproots can grow up to three feet deep. While flowering typically occurs in the second year of growth, a single, robust plant can produce more than 1,000 seeds. A variety of control methods work on Houndstongue.

**Cultural:** Eliminate new plant infestations immediately, and plant desirable vegetation to help keep Houndstongue out.

**Mechanical:** These control methods can be effective on smaller infestations. When hand-pulling Houndstongue, ensure you get the entire taproot. Meanwhile mowing puts enough stress on the plant to limit its seed production ability. If you hand-pull or mow down Houndstongue, bag and destroy the plant material so seeds don't escape.

**Chemical:** Herbicides are most effective when controlling Houndstongue, even used with cultural or mechanical control. Look for herbicides with the following active ingredients and apply them according to the following schedule. **Note: Chemical control of any weed can be difficult and confusing. If you are not experienced in chemical control or do not understand the product label, contact Ada County Weed Control to speak with a licensed applicator. Inappropriate application can kill desirable vegetation, and may violate federal law.**

- METSULFURON: Apply to actively growing plants from spring to fall
- IMAZAPIC: Apply a low-rate during the first year, and use at a higher rate the second year when the plant is in the rosette or bolting stages
- PICLORAM: Apply to actively growing plants from spring to fall
- 2, 4-D ESTER: Use in the early spring before plants are in bloom
- 2, 4-D AMINE: Apply to actively growing plants



**For questions or concerns, please contact us:**

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