

# TEASEL CONTROL

## CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS – adapted from Illinois Natural History Survey

**Recommended Practices:** Cutting, removal, herbicides and burning offer the best solutions for control.

### *Initial effort in areas of heavy infestation*

- Flowering stalks of plants in flower can be cut once flowering has initiated (as soon as any flowers are seen). The plant should not re-flower but die at the end of the growing season.
  - Remove cut flowering stalks from the area because seeds can mature on the stem even after cutting. Place in plastic bags, tie shut, and discard. Each plant removed is 2,000 seeds eliminated from the environment.
  - Cutting the stalk before flowering should be avoided because the plant will usually send up new flowering stalk(s).
  - Cutting and removing flowering stems may need to be repeated for several years to control teasel. Teasel in nearby areas should also be eliminated to prevent introduction of new seed.
- Foliar application of glyphosate or 2,4-D amine herbicide is recommended where cutting and removal is not feasible. Glyphosate is available under the trade name Roundup; 2,4-D amine is available under a number of trade names (Ortho Weed-B-Gone, Spectracide Weed Stop and many more).
  - Glyphosate is non-selective, so care should be taken not to let it come in contact with non-target species. Although glyphosate is most effective during the summer when the plant is actively growing, it is also effective in late fall or early spring. Teasel rosettes remain green and active after most plants have died back in the fall, and green up and start growing in the spring before many plants do. Application at these times will result in less potential harm to non-target species.<sup>1</sup>
    - Roundup should be applied carefully by sprayer to individual teasel rosettes during late fall or early spring. Application should be made on a spray-to-wet basis. Spray coverage should be uniform and complete. **Do not spray so heavily that herbicide drips off the teasel.**
  - Application of 2,4-D amine is selective to broadleaf plants; it will not harm most grasses. The herbicide 2,4-D amine should be applied in early spring when the rosettes are young. 2,4-D amine should be applied by hand sprayer at the recommended application rate on the label for spot-spraying weeds. Application should be uniform with the entire leaf being wet. **Do not spray so heavily that herbicide drips off the teasel.** Use the amine formulation of 2,4-D rather than the ester formulation to reduce vapor drift.
  - Either herbicide should be applied while backing away from the treated area to avoid contacting the wet herbicide.



<sup>1</sup> Roundup should not be used to control teasel in protected natural areas during the active growing season of most native plants except by professionals to avoid unnecessary injury to native species.

- Using Roundup or 2,4-D amine on the rosettes may have to be followed with cutting of any flowering stalks that grow from surviving rosettes.
- More potent herbicides are available to licensed commercial applicators.

### ***Initial effort in areas of light infestation***

- Late spring burns<sup>2</sup> may be useful for controlling teasel before it becomes dense. Once an area is densely covered with teasel rosettes, fire does not carry well through the teasel-infested area. Prescribed burns probably work best in conjunction with the other methods described.
- Flowering stems can be cut and removed as described above.

### ***Maintenance control***

- Teasel requires open areas of ground to germinate. Once you have removed teasel, **plant something in its place**, preferably native species adapted to the local environment (native grasses, sedges, etc.)
- Monitor the area periodically for teasel invasion. New plants should either be herbicided in the rosette stage or flowering stems should be cut and removed as described above. Periodic fall or late spring prescribed burns should help control teasel.

### **FAILED OR INEFFECTIVE PRACTICES**

- No biological controls are known that are feasible.
- Mowing will not eradicate it (rosettes are too low to ground); frequent mowing will reduce infestations
- Cutting flowering stems without subsequently removing the cut flower heads from the area leaves viable seed on the site. Cut flower heads typically contain viable seed and the seeds must be removed from the site.

### ***Tools and Supplies Needed***

- Work gloves (leather), long sleeved shirts, long pants, closed toe shoes
- Lopping shears (long handled pruning shears)
- Large heavy duty trash bags (“Contractor” bags) and ties
- Tank or backpack sprayer with proper concentration of herbicide mix
- 2 or 3-person team

### **To Learn More**

<http://wwx.inhs.illinois.edu/research/vmg/teasel/> Illinois Natural History Survey - Vegetation Management Guideline...Cut-leaved and Common Teasel

<https://mdc.mo.gov/trees-plants/problem-plant-control/invasive-plants/common-and-cut-leaved-teasel-control> Missouri Department of Conservation – Common and Cut-Leaf Teasel Control

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/weeds/controlling-teasel-weeds.htm/?print=1&loc=top> Gardening Know How - What Is Common Teasel: Tips for Controlling Teasel Weeds

<http://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/119605> Invasive Species Compendium Datasheet – Common Teasel [note: this is for those who want the whole story...]

<http://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/113926> Invasive Species Compendium Datasheet – Cut-Leaf Teasel [note: this is for those who want the whole story...]

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<sup>2</sup> Burning anything but very small areas requires experience, skill, and proper equipment. Hire a professional. Permits are required from your fire department for any burn.