



Absinthe (*Artemisia absinthium* L.)

aka Absinth, Maddewort, Warmat, Varmit, Wormwood

SK Provincial Designation: Noxious

Overview:

The Absinthe plant is a perennial plant that was introduced in the mid 1800's from Europe as an herb from medicinal purposes. This plants both resembles sage as well as has a sage-like odour.

Reproducing aggressively by seed, each plant is capable of producing up to 50000 seeds per stem. Seeds are generally viable for 3 to 4 years. The plant re-grows each the ground level each spring. This plant can be found on dry and moist sites, but is commonly found in well-drained soils.

Absinthe flowers from late July through to September. The flower heads contain only tubular flowers when the swollen portion of the flower head on which the flowers are attached (receptacle) is densely covered with long hairs.



Flowers

PHOTO: Mary Ellen Harte, bugwood.org

Habitat:

Absinthe can be found primarily on roadsides, waste areas, yard sites, tame forage and gravel pits.

Identification:

Stems: Absinthe can range from heights of 0.6 to 1.2 meters high. The stem is silver-grey in colour with fine hairs, grooved, and woody at the base.

Leaves: Leaves are greenish in colour on top and greyish below and are covered in fine hairs. They alternate on stem and grow between 5-10 centimeters in length. The leaves are finely divided into narrow and rather blunt segments, the lower leaves have long stalks whereas the upper leaves are almost stalkless.

Flowers: Flowers are either yellow or purple depending on the plant. They have small flower heads that are approximately 5 millimetres across, drooping, stalked, and densely crowded in the axils of small leaves on the upper branches. Absinth flowers from late July to September.

Seed: Seed are brownish in colour, very small, broader at the tip than the base, and are finely streaked.



PHOTO: Chris Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, Bugwood.org



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continued next page



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Absinthe (continued)

Prevention:

Absinthe was introduced to Saskatchewan as an medicinal herb planting that has since escaped into a natural area. Do not purchase or grow Absinthe. If removing this plant, ensure proper steps are taken for disposal, site re-vegetation, monitoring and after-care. For additional information, contact the SK Invasive Species Council.

Control:

Cultural: To prevent spread, minimizing soil disturbance from vehicles and machinery is important, along with avoiding over grazing.

Mechanical: In crop production areas it is important to till the soil to prevent establishment. Mowing can prevent the production of seeds if done several times throughout the growing season. Mowing is not effective in reducing the size of infestation if Absinthe has already been established in the area.

Chemical: Pesticide application in riparian areas requires certified pesticide applicators and must meet provincial Codes of Practice. The use of pesticides in any manner not published on the label or registered under the Minor Use of Pesticides regulation constitutes an offence under both the Federal Pest Control Products Act and provincial acts in Saskatchewan. For the latest information on pesticides for agricultural use in Saskatchewan please consult the provincial Guide To Crop Protection produced annually by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture or consult your local Ministry of Agriculture representative.



PHOTO: Chris Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, Bugwood.org



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PHOTO: Mary Ellen Harte, Bugwood.org

Sources:

Absinth. Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. 2014. <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca>

Artemisia absinthium L. absinthium. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2014. <http://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ARAB3>

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Control of Select Weeds on Pastures and hay Land in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. 2009. www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca



PHOTO: Steve Hurst, USDA NRCS PLANTS Database, Bugwood.org



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