

Oxeye Daisy  
*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*

Currently in Montana, noxious weeds infest about 7.6 million acres (Montana's Noxious Weed Management Plan, 2008). Many of these state listed noxious weeds were brought to America as ornamentals for gardens, medicinal purposes, by accident in discarded soil from a ship's ballast or unintentionally in bags of seed brought from other parts of the world. Whatever the cause of introduction, 32 non-native plant species have found their way onto Montana's state noxious weed list.

Oxeye Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) is a Priority 2B listed noxious weed in the state of Montana. Priority 2B species are noxious weeds that are abundant in Montana and widespread in many counties. Management criteria for these species includes eradication or containment where these species are less abundant. Management for these species shall be prioritized by local weed districts. Species listed as Priority 2B noxious weeds are: Canada thistle, field bindweed, leafy spurge, whitetop, Russian knapweed, spotted knapweed, diffuse knapweed, dalmation toadflax, St. Johnswort, sulfur cinquefoil, common tansy, oxeye daisy, houndstongue, yellow toadflax, and saltcedar.

Oxeye daisy is a short-lived perennial that is native to Europe and the temperate regions of Asia. The unopened flower buds of this plant are similar to capers and are often marinated and eaten. Along with many of the other noxious weed species, this plant is very versatile and can thrive in various habitat types. The places Oxeye daisy can typically be found is in meadows, pastures, woodlands, along irrigation ditches and roadsides as well as disturbed areas such as hay fields, lawns and gardens.

Oxeye daisy resembles its close cousin, the Shasta daisy. It can be difficult to determine the difference between the Shasta and the oxeye, even from comparing leaves from the two plant species. A general rule of thumb is that generally the flowers of the Shasta daisy are larger than those of the oxeye daisy, sometimes up to 2'' in diameter. The foliage of the Shasta plant is also more full, giving the plant a more 'bush-like' appearance.

This plant has a shallow root system with branched rhizomes and has the capacity to reproduce through these roots. Growing up to 3 feet in height, this dark green, smooth, stem is mostly unbranched. Basal and lower leaves of the plant are 2-5'' long and are widest at the tip; these leaves occur on long narrow stalks and have rounded teeth. Leaves that occur toward the apex are smaller in size; these leaves are toothed and do not grow on a long stalk.

Oxeye daisy flowers from June to August. Flowers are 1-2'' in diameter, with each stem producing a flower. The flower head itself consists of about 20 white ray florets that encircle a depressed yellow disc center. After pollination flower heads produce tiny, flat, black, ribbed seeds that can remain viable in the soil for up to 3 years. A single oxeye daisy plant can produce up to 500 seeds.

Oxeye daisy is still being sold in wildflower seed mix packages, so be sure to check the label for contents of wildflower seed mixes for this invasive, state listed noxious weed before you plant it.

Oxeye daisy is difficult to control because it reproduces through both seed and rhizomatous roots. Oxeye daisy can be controlled by various integrated weed management techniques such as herbicides, hand pulling and cultivation. Often control measures are most successful by using a combination of integrated weed management control methods. Please take a few moments to learn about oxeye daisy and the other state listed noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are not currently a problem in your area, they may be in the near future. For more information about Montana's state listed noxious weeds, regulated plants, or weed species listed on your county weed list, please contact your local county weed district (can list weed district name here... ex: Lewis & Clark County Weed District) at (406) (Phone number). Or you can contact the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-3144.