

St. Johnswort
(*Hypericum perforatum*)

Currently in Montana, noxious weed infest about 8.2 million acres. 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 non-native plant species have found their way onto Montana's state listed noxious weed list.

There are over 370 species of the genus *Hypericum* that exist worldwide in temperate and subtropical regions of North America, Europe, Turkey, Russia, India, China and Brazil. St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*) has long been used for its medicinal properties and is well suited to survive in dry, gravelly or sandy soils and likes sun. This plant is found in areas where the ground has been disturbed. St. Johnswort is toxic to horses, cattle, and sheep, if eaten in large quantities, it can be fatal. Stems have 2 ridges, are a reddish color, and have glands that appear as black dots. Leaves are yellow-green in color, oval shaped, and are 1" in length. The entire surface of the leaves are covered with tiny transparent dots, you can see these if you hold a leaf up to the light. These dots are glands where the plant's oils are contained. Flowers have 5 petals that are yellow with tiny, glandular black dots. Flowers form clusters at the end of stems; bloom occurs late spring to early mid-summer. The plant may have gotten its name because it usually blooms around the birthday of St. John the Baptist. When the plant has set seed and died for the year, the whole plant turns a rust color. Seeds are grown in seed pods that have 3 sections that produce many tiny dark brown seeds. One plant can produce as many as 100,000 seeds in one season! St. Johnswort is difficult to control because it has the capability to reproduce by producing new plants from the buds on its roots and its seeds remain viable for long periods of time.

Please take a few moments to learn about 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) 444-5600.