

Sulfur cinquefoil
(*Potentilla recta*)

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.

Sulfur cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*) is native to the eastern Mediterranean region and can be found in grasslands, shrubby/forested areas, logged areas, roadsides, and other waste areas. This plant has a shallow branched, woody rooted called a caudex that can grow up to 3' in length! Sulfur cinquefoil can grow up to 2' tall and is sparsely covered with stiff hairs that jut outward from the stems, leafstalk, and flower stems at right angles. The leaves of this plant are palmate and have 5 to 7 toothed leaflets that are green in color on the underside; as opposed to grayish-green on the underside of native cinquefoils. Most of the leaves on this plant grow along the stem and decrease in both size and shape toward the top. The flower of sulfur cinquefoil is light yellow in color and each flower has 5 petals that are deeply notched at the tips. The center of the flower is also yellow. These seeds are brown to purple in color, comma shaped, and covered with net-like ridges. There are several native species of cinquefoil that occur in Montana that can be confused with invasive sulfur cinquefoil. There are three characteristics helpful in telling apart a native cinquefoil from noxious cinquefoil. The first characteristic is the hirsute-hispid hairs all over the stems, only sulfur cinquefoil has long, coarse hairs. Secondly, the seeds of sulfur cinquefoil are ridged whereas the seeds of other cinquefoils are smooth; thirdly, sulfur cinquefoil has more stem leaves than other cinquefoil species. Native Americans used this plant to treat wounds because its high tannin content makes tissues contract. The fruit of this plant is edible.

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.