



Oxeye Daisy

Chrysanthemum leucanthemum

Leucanthemum vulgare

Description:

A perennial that spreads primarily by seed, but also by shallow, creeping roots (rhizomes). It grows in a wide variety of habitats. And flourishes in nutrient poor soils. Individual plants can produce over 500 seeds that are viable in the soil for 2-3 years or more.

Stems are generally unbranched and grow up to 1 m tall.

Leaves are spoon-shaped near the bottoms of stems, coarsely lobed and stalked; upper leaves are narrower, alternate and stalk-less or clasp the stem, with wavy margins.

Flowers are composed of a yellow central disk surrounded by white petals. The flowers are borne singly at the end of stems and can be up to 5 cm in diameter.



Control

Oxeye Daisy and the very similarly flowered Scentless Chamomile can be considered conspicuous, as there are no native white-flowered daisies in Alberta. Often perceived to be a 'pretty' wildflower, this non-native is an aggressive invader.

Oxeye Daisy is avoided by cattle and therefore capable of dominating pastures and rangeland. Dense infestations reduce forage for both wildlife and livestock. Repeated mowing prevents seed production, but also can stimulate re-sprouting of stems. Hand-pulling or digging before seed production is effective, but it is important to remove as much of the fibrous roots and rhizomes as possible. Ground disturbance while digging should be kept to a minimum.

Several herbicides are effective at controlling Oxeye when applied to actively growing plants up to the flowering stage.

The availability of closely related plants through the nursery and seed trade contradicts the perception of Oxeye as an invasive plant, and subsequent control. Shasta daisy is a cultivar (*originated from*) of Oxeye sold through nurseries and as seed in wildflower mixes. This fact makes public awareness critical to control. The two plants can cross breed, resulting in an invasive hybrid that is extremely difficult to distinguish from either parent. Invasive ornamentals can be very difficult to contain and should be avoided. Consumers should carefully read the contents of so-called 'wildflower' seed mixes and avoid those containing invasive ornamentals.