

Dalmatian Toadflax

Linaria dalmatica

Linaria genistifolia ssp. *dalmatica*

Provincial Designation: Nuisance

Description:

A perennial plant that reproduces both by seed and creeping roots (rhizomes). First year plants develop a rosette of leaves and a deep root system. The main taproot may grow 1.2 m deep and lateral rhizomes can extend up to 3.7 m. Flowers are identical to Common toadflax, however the leaf shape is quite different and Dalmatian prefers warmer sites.

Stems are erect, hairless, and grow to 1 m tall with some branching in the upper part. There may be one to many floral stems per plant.

Leaves are broad, hairless, heart-shaped and clasp the stem. They are arranged alternately and are crowded on the stem.

Flowers are bright yellow and borne on the upper branches of stems. They resemble snapdragon flowers and can be up to 3.5 cm long, including the spur extending from the base.



Control

Dalmatian toadflax contains compounds toxic to livestock, but since the plant is generally unpalatable reports of poisoning are rare. In western Alberta, the plant is usually found along valley bottoms that are sheltered and/or have southern exposures. It is well adapted to dry, coarse textured soils. A mature plant can produce up to 500,000 seeds annually, that may remain viable up to 10 years.



Mowing will prevent seed production, but won't kill the plant. Repetitive hand-pulling can be effective on new and small infestations. Be sure to get as much of the root as possible and dispose of it properly. A few herbicides can manage the weed when applied as directed. A number of biological control agents imported from Europe have provided effective control in BC, and one has been established in Alberta.

A combination of cultural and chemical control, along with seeding and fertilizing of desirable plant species will have the most success. Keep in mind that any weed control strategy will not have lasting success unless sound land management practices are incorporated – limit soil disturbance, avoid overgrazing, and use only weed-free seed.