



Inside Ag

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Bug of the Month Rhinusa Linariae



Yellow toadflax is native to Europe and Asia where it is not a weed but can actually be a rare plant over some of its range. In Colorado it has no natural enemies and has escaped to cover tens of thousands of acres of forest and range lands, providing poor forage and crowding out natives.

Yellow toadflax continues to invade new and remote regions of the state causing major headaches for ranchers and resource managers. Fortunately, there are a number of biological control agents in the development stage.



The Colorado Department of Agriculture is a partner in the toadflax consortium, an international group dedicated to the study of toadflaxes and their biological controls. Through the consortium we have a new agent, recently arrived from Canada where it has been a success.

The insect is a small black weevil with a long curved snout, originally from Europe and Asia, known as *Rhinusa linariae*. It feeds on the roots of yellow toadflax as a larva. The larvae form nodules called galls, and emerge as adults in late summer to spend the fall and winter in the soil waiting for the first foliage of spring.



In the spring, they to feed on new shoots and then lay eggs on the roots to continue the cycle. From three hundred adult weevils we hope to build large populations that can be spread to other parts of Colorado and to other states in the west.