

# Orange hawkweed

Colorado Department of  
Agriculture

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## Key ID Points

1. Basal leaves with 1 or 2 small leaves.
2. Red-orange flower heads with petals that are strap-shaped with notched tips.
3. Hairy leaves and stems.

## Orange hawkweed Identification and Management



### Identification and Impacts

Orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) is a perennial plant originating from Europe. It reproduces from runners, rhizomes, sporadic root buds, and seed. Leaves are basal with one or two small leaves occasionally occurring on the bristly stem. Rosette leaves are four to six inches in length, spatula shaped and have finely toothed margins. The plant grows 10 to 20 inches in height. Flowers have 5 to 35 red-orange-yellow heads with petals that are strap-shaped with notched tips. The flowers generally grow in clusters, and look similar to dandelions. They range from 1/2 to 3/4 inches in size. The plant also contains a milky juice.

Habitat for orange hawkweed include disturbed areas, ski-fields, grasslands, pastures, rangelands, woodlands, alpine meadows and yards. It grows in temperate and mountain regions and can tolerate a variety of conditions.

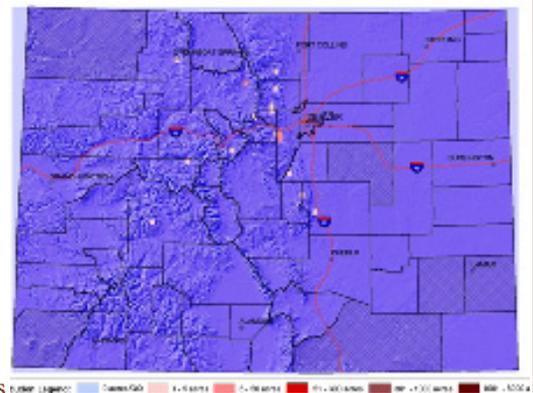
Orange hawkweed displaces native vegetation and reduces livestock and wildlife forage. The plants quickly form dense infestations which dominate the site with a solid mat of rosettes or seedlings. Orange hawkweed readily escapes gardens and becomes a serious problem in

natural areas. The seed viability of orange hawkweed is seven years. The site must be monitored for at least eight years after the last flowering adult plants have been eliminated and treatments repeated when necessary.

The key to effective control of orange hawkweed is preventing the establishment of plant communities through sound land management practices. Maintain healthy pastures and rangeland and continually monitor your property for new infestations. If plant populations of orange hawkweed exist, combining herbicides and cultural control methods can be effective. Details on the back of this sheet can help to create a management plan compatible with your site ecology.

Orange hawkweed is designated as a "List A" species in the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. It is required to be eradicated wherever found in the State. For more information visit [www.colorado.gov/ag/weeds](http://www.colorado.gov/ag/weeds) and click on the Noxious Weed Management Program. Or call the State Weed Coordinator at the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, 303-239-4100.

Map of orange hawkweed infestation.



Photos © Bottom 2 lower left: Kelly Uhing, Colorado Department of Agriculture; Top Left and Top Center: Michael Shephard, USDA Forest Service; Above map: Crystal Andrews, Colorado Dept. of Ag

*Hieracium aurantiacum*

**CULTURAL**

When native forbs and grasses are already present, assisting plant competitiveness by supplementing fertilizers can be an effective cultural control method. This proves to be most successful on pasture and rangelands where soil nitrogen levels may be depleted.

**BIOLOGICAL**

Biocontrol agents are not included in the prescribed management plans by the State for List A Species. Eradication is the management objective of all List A's. No biocontrol agent for Orange hawkweed is available. For more information on biocontrol in Colorado, please contact the Palisade Insectary of the Colorado Department of Agriculture at 970-464-7916.

**MECHANICAL**

NOT recommended because of the weed's ability to reproduce by stolons, rhizomes and root fragments. This often renders mechanical control obsolete.

*Integrated Weed Management:*

*Since orange hawkweed has been identified in small quantities around Colorado, preventing the populations from spreading is important in management of the weed. Using a combination of control methods proves to be the most effective way to control populations. Using cultural and herbicide control methods together proves to be key in eradicating established infestations.*

**HERBICIDES**

**NOTE:** The following are recommendations for herbicides that can be applied to range and pasturelands. Rates are approximate and based on equipment with an output of 30 gal/acre. Please read label for exact rates. **Always read, understand, and follow the label directions. The herbicide label is the LAW!**

Herbicide	Rate	Application Timing
Aminopyralid (Milestone)	6-7 oz. product/acre + 0.25% v/v non-ionic surfactant	Apply when plants are in rosette to bolting stage. (Spring to early summer)*
Clopyralid (Transline)	1.33 pint product/acre + 0.25% v/v non-ionic surfactant	Apply when plants are in the rosette growth stage. (Spring to early summer)*
Clopyralid + 2,4-D (Curtail)	2 qt. product/acre + 0.25% v/v non-ionic surfactant	Apply when plants are in the rosette growth stage. (Spring to early summer)*

Note: \*Ideally treat in the reproductive stage, which is bolting to flowering. Fall treatments are ineffective.

Additional herbicide recommendations for other species can be found at: [www.colorado.gov/agconservation/CSUHerbicideRecommendations.pdf](http://www.colorado.gov/agconservation/CSUHerbicideRecommendations.pdf)

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