

Goatsrue Fact Sheet

Galega officinalis

Fabaceae Family



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Distinguishing Features:

- 1 **Flowers.** The flowers are pea-like and white to bluish lilac to reddish purple. They are found at the end of stems or in leaf axils.
- 2 **Seeds:** Seeds are bean-shaped, dull yellow in color, and about 2 1/2 times the size of alfalfa seeds. Seeds drop on the ground when mature and may be spread by water, equipment, or animals. Seeds may remain viable for 10 years.
- 3 **Leaves:** The leaves are alternate and compound with a terminal leaflet and 6 to 10 pairs of leaflets.
- 4 **Flowering Time:** Goatsrue flowers from June until the fall frost.
- 5 **Life cycle:** Goatsrue sprouts in early spring and begins to produce flowers and fruits from mid-summer through fall. The seeds contained in these fruits can then remain viable in the soil for up to 10 years.

Impacts:

- Goatsrue contains a toxic alkaloid that can be fatal to many herbivores and humans in large concentrations.
- Goatsrue spreads quickly through riparian and similar areas, forming monocultures and greatly reducing biodiversity.
- Goatsrue can easily contaminate alfalfa fields as its seeds are very similar in shape and size to those of alfalfa.

Control:

- For small infestations, shallow cultivation, mowing, clipping, and cutting can be performed, but are not recommended. The plant will flower and produce seed even when cut short, so mowing, clipping and cutting are not very effective.
- There are currently no known biological control agents for Goatsrue.
- Selective herbicides such as 2,4-D/Dicamba are effective in controlling Goatsrue. Treatment is most effective when done before flowering for 2 to 3 consecutive years (Oregon DOA).



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