

Common tansy



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(*Tanacetum vulgare* L.)

Common tansy is a perennial forb that is native to Europe and was introduced into the U.S. as an ornamental. The plant is identified easily by the fern-like leaves, yellow “button” flowers and a bitter odor emitted when the leaves are crushed. Common tansy grows from 1.5 to 6 feet tall and spreads by seed and root. The stems have purple splotches. Leaves are alternate, smooth to slightly pubescent and deeply divided into narrow, toothed segments that resemble a fern. Flowers are yellow, 0.25 to 0.5 inch across, flat topped and arranged in clusters.

Common tansy is an aggressive invader of pastures, vacant and disturbed lands, roadsides and stream banks. The plant contains alkaloids that can be toxic to humans and animals. Illnesses in humans have occurred after hand-pulling. Milk of dairy cattle is tainted if common tansy is present in hay.

