

# STOP THE SPREAD

## St. John's Wort

*Hypericum perforatum*



**St John's Wort contains two toxic compounds, which can cause photosensitivity in grazers, loss of weight, and even death if consumed in large quantities**

### Origin

Native to Eurasia and Northern Africa, St. John's Wort is a perennial that forms dense stands and displaces native vegetation. It also contains a toxin that causes skin irritation and blistering in light-coloured livestock when they are exposed to sunlight.

### Where to Look

St. John's Wort prefers dry sandy soils and full sun. It can be found along roadsides and rail lines, in grasslands, open forests, grazing and disturbed areas. It is also able to invade healthy range lands, reducing wildlife and livestock forage.

### Control

There are many methods of controlling St. John's Wort; grazing has been used, but only in conjunction with other forms of control. This plant is toxic and can even cause death if consumed in sufficient quantities. Biocontrol of St. John's Wort consists of two *Chrysolina* species were introduced to B.C. and released in 1952. Mechanical control is not very effective as removal of the stems by any means (grazing, fire, defoliation) stimulates re-sprouting. Hand pulling/digging can not effectively remove the extensive root system.



### Look For:

- ◊ **Stems:** Can be between 10-110cm long, they are smooth and will likely have more than one stem per plant. Can have 25-100 flowers per cluster.
- ◊ **Leaves:** Are elliptical or linear and are rounded at the base of the leaf.
- ◊ **Flowers:** They have small five-petaled yellow flowers that are typically 2cm in diameter.

### Prevent the Spread in Manitoba

St. John's Wort seeds can be dispersed by wind, water, human activity and animals. Seeds can remain viable in the soil for many years and can thus be transported in contaminated soil.

**Report a Sighting:**



**Invasive Species Council of Manitoba**

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