

## **Q. Hoary Alyssum**

*(Berteroa incana)*

### **Key Characteristics:**

Hoary Alyssum is a member of the Mustard Family, introduced from Europe and Eurasia. It can be either annual or biennial and reproduces by seed. It was brought to the U.S. as a contaminant in hay in the 1800s. It is unpalatable to native animals, most grazers, and may be toxic to horses. Its presence reduces the value of hay and pasture.



**Stems** are gray or dull green/brownish color with tiny hairs which can be seen close up. Stems are sturdy, upright, and can be 3 inches to 18 inches tall. Plants may have one stem or many stems shooting out from a single base to form a shrub-like appearance. Later in the growing season there will be clusters of many tiny white flowers at the tip of each branch.

**Leaves** are matte green and hairy like the stems. They are usually 2-5 cm long and less than 1 cm wide. They can be larger in some cases.

Hoary Alyssum is common in Pitkin County, with infestations along Mclain Flats Rd., in Woody Creek, near Hwy 82 between mm 34 & 36, and near the Coke Ovens in Redstone. Please alert the Land Management Department of any additional infestations on public or private land by calling 970.429.2887.

### **Biological control:**

There is no biological control available yet for Hoary Alyssum, contact the Colorado Department of Agriculture for updates on the latest research in biological controls.

### **Cultural control:**

Cultural control is the best way to prevent or control Hoary Alyssum. Hoary Alyssum invades overgrazed areas and disturbed land. To prevent invasion, monitor pasture and range health closely and do not overgraze. Maintaining a dense cover of desirable plants will prevent Hoary Alyssum seeds from germinating. If you disturb the soil, immediately revegetate the area with native plants.

Proper irrigation of pastures and hay fields will allow your desirable plants to outcompete Hoary Alyssum; this weed thrives in hot, dry conditions but cannot compete against healthy, irrigated perennials.



### **Mechanical control:**

Hand-pulling can be effective if done thoroughly. Mowing early in the summer can control spread, but will not kill the plants.

### **Chemical control:**

There are effective herbicide options for Hoary Alyssum control. Contact the Pitkin County Land Management Department for more specific information about products, rates, and equipment calibration.