

H. Scentless Chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*)

Key Characteristics:

Scentless chamomile is a member of the Sunflower family. It is an annual that grows 1/2 to 2 feet tall with a **bushy** habit. **Blossoms** are showy with white ray (outer) flowers and yellow centers. **Leaves** are fern-like. **Seeds** are viable as soon as the flower is formed, and remain so up to 15 years when buried, making early control of Scentless Chamomile the key to effective management.



This weed is nearly identical in appearance to the strongly-scented species used for tea, but lacks the distinctive chamomile odor. It has no forage value, and can in fact cause skin rashes and blistering of mucus membranes, sometimes resulting in the ultimate starvation of wildlife who have attempted to eat it.

Locations:

Scentless Chamomile is common along rights-of-way and ditches and in cultivated fields and disturbed sites throughout Pitkin County. It is a typical front-line invader in areas of heavy disturbance.

Biological control:

None known at this time.

Cultural control:

Promptly re-seed disturbed areas with competitive native grasses.

Mechanical control:

Hand pulling is the most effective method to both control Scentless Chamomile populations and prevent their spread into new areas. Once plants are pulled, they should be bagged and trashed if any flowers are present, as they likely contain viable seed.



H. Scentless Chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*) (continued)

Chemical control:

There are effective herbicide options for Scentless Chamomile control. The earlier the application the more effective the control. Herbicide application is not effective on Scentless Chamomile when the majority of the plants are flowering because seed production has already occurred. Contact the Pitkin County Land Management Department for more specific information about products, rates, and equipment calibration.

Native Look-Alikes:

Foliage and Growth Habit are the keys to distinguishing Scentless Chamomile from white native daisies in Colorado. Stands of Chamomile have a distinctive bushy appearance, and the foliage is very finely divided and fern-like. By contrast, the native white daisies that most closely resembling Scentless Chamomile (e.g., species of *Erigeron* like that pictured below) usually occur small clumps and have leaves that are entire or slightly lobed.



Whiplash Daisy
(*Erigeron flagellaris*)

Note that while the blossom is similar to that of Scentless Chamomile, leaves are basal and entire (left), and stands are not bushy (right).