

## II. Yellow Toadflax (“Butter and Eggs”) (*Linaria vulgaris*)

### **Key Characteristics:**

Yellow toadflax is a member of the Snapdragon family and is sometimes called common toadflax or butter and eggs. It was introduced from Europe as an ornamental and has now become a serious problem to rangeland and mountain meadows. It is a perennial reproducing from seed and from its extensive creeping root system. **Leaves** are alternate and linear. **Flowers** are yellow with an orange throat and spurred. Yellow toadflax does well in all types of soils up to 10,000 feet. Its displacement of desirable grasses not only reduces ecological diversity, but also reduces rangeland value and can lead to erosion problems. Because of its early vigorous growth, extensive underground root system, and effective seed dispersal, yellow toadflax is difficult to control.



### **Locations:**

Yellow toadflax is common in Snowmass Village and the City of Aspen, especially along the Roaring Fork River and atop Mountain, and along the Castle Creek and Frying Pan drainages. It also occurs throughout the Crystal River Valley, including the very sensitive Filoha Meadows area, where it grows in and among the exquisite native orchids and is thus effectively impossible to eradicate without severely damaging important native diversity. The number and extent of infestations throughout the County is alarming, as this is a very difficult weed to kill, and success has been very limited.

### **Biological control:**

Several species are currently in development at the Colorado Department of Agriculture Insectary in Palisade. Contact them for more information.

### **Cultural control:**

Maintain competitive communities of desirable species. Re-seed any open ground with native, perennial grasses to prevent invasion by yellow toadflax and other weed species.

### **Mechanical control:**

Hand-pulling and digging are not recommended for control of Yellow Toadflax because it is unlikely that the entire root system will be removed, and any root part left behind will further the infestation. In cases of very small infestations of a handful of plants successful mechanical eradication may be possible. Tillage is also not recommended.

### **Chemical control:**

Contact Pitkin County Land Management Department for more specific information about herbicide products, application rates, and equipment calibration.