

Invasive Plant Control Methods & Terms

Non-chemical Methods:

Hand Pulling, Digging – Effective for controlling annual and biennial weeds (e.g., garlic mustard) or small woody plants (e.g., bush honeysuckle). Be sure to remove the entire root system.

Mulching - Can be tree mulch, sawdust, or lawn clippings serving as a physical barrier to germinating weeds. Most effective in controlling annual weeds and less effective for herbaceous creeping perennials (e.g., Canada thistle) or woody plants. *Weed barrier fabric* is also effective in preventing annual weed emergence in landscape plantings.

Mowing – Frequent mowing is effective in controlling many annual weeds, and some perennials by repeatedly removing the top portion of the plants thereby starving out the root system over time. For lawns, keeping the mower deck set in a higher position will allow the turf to out-compete many weed species without having to resort to chemical control methods.

Burning – Prescribed burns for prairie ecosystems are generally performed in 3 to 4-year time intervals to control spring emerging, shallow-rooted annual weeds and some woody species that compete with the native, warm-season prairie wildflowers and grasses.

Girdling – The removal of a strip of bark around the lower trunk of a tree or woody shrub which deprives the plant of nutrients and results in a slow death. Effective in controlling unwanted trees in a landscape or wooded area. Eventually, the dead tree will need to be cut down if in a landscape or left as a nesting place for wildlife. Caution must be taken to make sure the dead limbs do not fall onto structures, hiking trails, or power lines.

Chemical Methods:

Foliar Spot Spray – Apply herbicide mixture in a water carrier onto the foliage of the target plant during the growing season using a back-pack or hand-pump sprayer. Spray to wet the foliage. Use a blue dye in the herbicide mix to help identify treated plants.

Basal Bark – Apply herbicide, usually mixed with an oil penetrant carrier, onto the lower 18” of woody stems (6” in diameter or less) with a low-pressure sprayer [20% herbicide + 80% oil carrier]. Spray all the way around the stem including the root collar. Use a blue dye in the herbicide mix to help identify treated stems.

Cut Stump – First, cut off the woody plant’s stems or trunk near ground level then treat the stumps immediately after the cut with the herbicide mixture using either with a squirt bottle, sponge applicator or paint brush. Use a blue dye in the herbicide mix to help identify treated stumps.

Wipe or Paint – A herbicide, generally undiluted, that is applied *selectively* to a cut stump, stem or individual plant using specialized equipment that wipes or coats the plant. Examples include the *Kill Stick*, *Glove of Death*, rope wick, or a paint brush. Use a blue dye in the herbicide mix to help identify treated stumps or plants.

Herbicides:

Woody Plant Herbicides: Garlon, Vastlan, Crossbow and Element - all contain *triclopyr*; Tordon RTU and Pathway contain *2,4-D + picloram*

Broadleaf Weed Herbicides: 2,4-D (several brand names), Trimec contains *2,4-D*, *2,4-DP* and *dicamba*; Transline contains *clopyralid*; *Glyphosate* (several brands) controls both broadleaf and grassy weeds, and is non-selective.

Grassy Weed Herbicides: *Glyphosate* (several brand names) which is non-selective; *sethoxydim* or *clethodim* are selective herbicides for controlling certain grassy weeds in or among broadleaf plants.

Other Terms:

Annual - A plant that completes its lifecycle in one season.

Biennial - A plant with a two-year lifecycle.

Creeping Perennial - A plant that may live for several years and produces horizontal, underground root or stem structures capable of developing new shoots, thus generally found growing in a “patch” pattern (e.g., Canada thistle, Quackgrass).

Simple Perennial - A plant that may live for several years and produces a main tap root from which successive shoots may emerge (e.g., Dandelion, Curly Dock).

Herbaceous - A non-woody plant.

Selective – A herbicide that has activity on certain plant species with no activity on others. Example includes Garlon (*triclopyr*), which controls many broadleaf plants but has no activity on grasses.

Non-selective – A herbicide that has activity on both broadleaf and grassy plants. Example includes Ranger PRO® (*glyphosate*). Care must be taken to avoid contact to non-target (desirable) plants.

Always read and follow label directions prior to using any herbicide product

Products listed are for example purposes and not meant for endorsement