

Section XVIII. - Noxious weeds

The Kansas Noxious Weed Law was first enacted in 1937. It is designed to control, manage and eradicate plants designated as noxious weeds by the Kansas Legislature.

The law assigns specific weed control responsibilities to three groups; landowners, counties, and state. The City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department is bound by this law as landowners of public and private land. This law states that landowners of both public and private property are required to control and eradicate all noxious weeds on lands that they own or manage. The list of noxious weeds below must be dealt with immediately at the State of Kansas' order.

Musk thistle



The musk thistle is primarily a pest of pastures, hayfields, roadsides, and non crop areas. This is an upright plant that may reach up to 6' in height. The stem of the thistle is erect, branched, and has spines covering it. Leaves are dark green with light green to white midribs. Most leaves are 10" long to 4" wide. **Margin** of leaves are also covered with spines. The identifying characteristic of the Musk thistle is the purple to pink flower at the top of the stem.

Johnson grass

This pest species occurs in crop fields, pastures, abandoned fields, rights-of-way, forest edges, and along stream banks. Johnson grass is a tall coarse grass. It grows in dense clumps and can reach up to 8' in height. The leaves are smooth, 6-20" long. The stem of the grass is pink to rusty red at the base of the stem. Seed heads are large and loose.



Sericea lespedeza



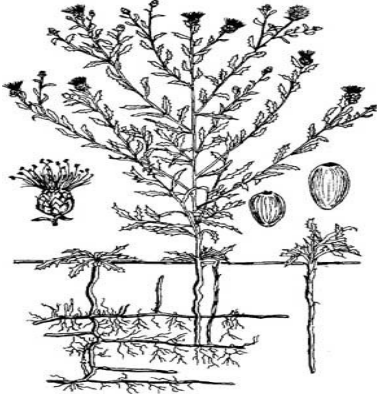
Sericea lespedeza is a shrubby, deciduous plant that grows to about 2' to 5' tall. The course stem of the pest is covered with numerous branches. The stem and the branches are very densely leaved. Leaves are 1/4" to 1" long and 1/16" to 1/4" wide. The lower leaf surface has silky hairs covering it. The flowers of Sericea lespedeza are yellowish-white with purple or pink markings and appear from mid July to early October.

Bindweed

Bindweed grows in a vine form as dense ground cover. Leaf size and shape vary but they are usually 1" to 2" long, and shaped like an arrowhead. Flowers are funnel shaped, about 1" in diameter, and white or pink in color.



Russian knapweed



Russian knapweed has stems that are erect and branch openly. The stems generally get 18-36” in height. Lower leaves on the stem are 2” to 4” wide while upper leaves are narrower. The flowers are cone shaped and about ¼” to ½” in diameter. They are pink to lavender in color and are located on the tips of the branch. Russian knapweed will grow in cultivated fields, fence rows, roadsides, and along ditch banks.

Bur ragweed



Bur ragweed occurs in moist places of fields, rangeland, and roadsides. This is an erect plant 1’ to 2’ high, bushy, and usually branching from the base and covered with fine wooly hairs. Bur ragweed is purplish-white in appearance. Leaves are a dusty white color, and the end segment of the leaves is much larger than the other segments. The flowers on the plant are yellowish-green and the fruit produced is bur like 1 1/2mm to 2mm long with spines protruding.



Hoary cress

Hoary cress lives in a wide variety of environmental conditions. It grows in waste places, cultivated fields, and pastures most typically. The stem of the plant can grow up to 3’ tall. Leaves are grayish-green up to 4” long and shaped like arrowheads. The flowers are white with 4 petals ¼” across. These dense flower clusters are visible in April and May. Hoary cress is also called “White top”.



Canada thistle



Canada thistle infests crops, pastures, rangeland, roadsides, and non crop areas. This plant has an erect stem 1 1/2’ to 4’ tall. The stems are branched, and slightly hairy. Leaves are lance shaped with spiny toothed margins. Rose-purple, lavender, or sometimes white flowers occur from June through October and are in round umbrella shaped clusters. The fruit of the Canada thistle are 1” to 1 1/2” long and are called achenes.

Bull thistle

Bull thistle will invade almost any type of disturbed area, such as forests, clear cuts, and pastures. The plants tall spiny stems can reach up to 7” tall. Leaves are lance shaped, hairy and can be from 3” to 12” in length. The flower heads are purple, 1 1/2” to 2” in diameter and 1” to 2” in length, and spine tipped. This plant is often mistaken for musk thistle.



Quack grass



Quack grass is a common pest of crops, turf-grass, lawns, nurseries, and landscapes. The plant develops as a dense mat of underground stems. The stems can grow 1' to 3" tall. Leaves are bright green and are approximately 1 1/2" to 12" long. The upper surfaces of the leaves may or may not have hair, but the lower leaf surfaces will be hairless. Quack grass has a long narrow spike for a seed-head. The spikes range from 2" to 8" in length.

Leafy spurge

Leafy spurge invades disturbed sites, prairies, savannas, pastures, abandoned fields, and roadside areas. This is an erect branching plant 2' to 3-1/2' tall with smooth stems. Stems usually occur in clusters. Leaves are small, oval to lance shaped. The flowers of leafy spurge are yellowish-green in color and bloom in clusters. Identifying characteristic of this plant is it contains a milky white sap.



Pignut



Pignut is an herb with stems that reach 8" to 12" in length. At the base of the stems are a tuft of leaves. The leaves on the plant are 3" to 5" long with characteristic glandular dots. The flowers on Pignut are yellow, or orange-red and about 1/2" long.

Kudzu

The preferred habitat of Kudzu is forest edges, abandoned fields, roadsides and disturbed areas where there is a lot of sunlight. This plant is a semi woody climbing vine. The leaflets on the vine are dark green and up to 4" across. Flowers on Kudzu are about 1/2" long, purple, highly fragrant, and hang in clusters. Flowering occurs in late summer and is followed by production of brown, hairy, flattened, seed pods.

