



GOATSRUE

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(*Galega officinalis*)

Goatsrue is a tall, herbaceous plant that invades wet, disturbed areas in Utah, Pennsylvania, and New York. Goatsrue is listed as a Federal Noxious Weed. Plants are shrubby and multi-stemmed with alternate, pinnately compound leaves. Purple, white and rose, pea-like flowers are arranged in terminal or axillary racemes. Fruit are short pods with up to 9 seeds each. Goatsrue invades wet disturbed areas such as streambanks, low pastures and ditches. It can form dense thickets and is toxic to livestock. Goatsrue, a native to Southern Europe and the Mediterranean was first introduced into the United States in Utah in 1891 as forage for livestock.



IDENTIFICATION

- The small lilac, purplish or white flowers are in axillary racemes and produce narrow, almost cylindrical pods.
- The plant is without scent, unless bruised, when it emits a disagreeable odour whence perhaps its name of goatsrue.
- It has a mucilaginous and somewhat bitter and astringent taste. It colours the saliva yellowish-green, if chewed.



MEDICAL USAGE

- Relief of diabetes mellitus symptoms
- Contains guanidine that decreases blood sugar by decreasing insulin resistance
- Leaves stimulate development of mammary glands and is one of the most potent herbs to increase breast milk
- Used to increase breast size in non-lactating women
- Increases sweating to bring down a fever
- Native American tribes at various times used it to treat rheumatism, fevers, pulmonary problems, bladder disorders, coughing, hair loss and reproductive disorders



WHERE TO LOOK

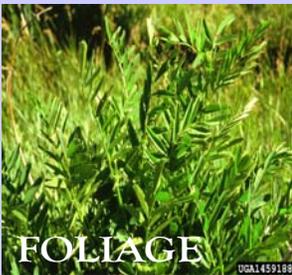
Cropland, water-ways, pastures, fence lines, prairies, open woodlands, roadways, meadows, woodlands, sunny forest edges and wet, marshy areas. The plant prefers light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and can grow in nutritionally poor soil. It prefers acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soil. It can grow in semi-shade or no shade and requires moist soil.

LIFE CYCLE



Seeds are dull yellow, bean shaped and approximately 2.5-3mm long

Seed pods are narrow and about 1 inch long



- Alternate, pinnately compound leaves with 6 to 8 pairs of leaflets (1-5cm long).
- Tip of each leaflet has a small hair-like appendage.
- Stems are hollow and cylindrical

- Purple to white, peal-like flowers are borne in terminal or axillary racemes containing 20-50 flowers.
- Plant blooms from June throughout the growing season.
- Perennial legume that ranges from 2-6 feet in height.



GOATSRUE GROWTH HABIT

From the several-headed root, rise erect stems, about 3-6 feet high, smooth and branched, bearing pinnate leaves with 6 to 8 pairs of lance-shaped leaflets, 3/4 to 2 inches long with an odd terminal one. The leaflets are bright green, smooth (or very slightly hairy), on short foot-stalks.

CONTROL & MANAGEMENT

Eradication of goatsrue can restore pastures and other land to productivity. Strategies for control and management include:

Cultural Control: Mowing, clipping, cutting and shallow cultivation are poor means of control. The plant will flower and produce seed even when very small. Alternate cropping and row crops are effective since the cultivation interrupts the life cycle.

Chemical Control: Selective herbicides are the major control method. Crowns of treated plants may remain viable up to seven years unless retreated or excavated and removed.

Biological Control: None are known.



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