

# HAWKWEED ALERT!

## MOUSE-EAR HAWKWEED

*(Hieracium pilosella or Pilosella officinarum)*

Mouse-ear hawkweed originates from Europe and Northern Asia, however has colonised other countries such as New Zealand, USA, Canada and Japan, where it threatens biodiversity and agricultural productivity. It is a highly invasive plant which suppresses the growth of other species. Mouse-ear hawkweed is a Class 1 Noxious Weed in NSW.

**Description:** Perennial herb with a lemon yellow flower head on a single stem up to 40 cm high. Leaves basal, forming as a rosette or on stolons, broader above the middle, to 10 cm long, upper surface with scattered long coarse simple hairs, lower surface with fine non-glandular hairs. Leaf, rosettes and stolons (purple) can form dense mats. Flowers mostly spring to summer but some flowers present to the end of autumn. Stolons grow to 30 cm long.



Single stems with lemon yellow flower head. Hairy leaves form from rosettes; joined via stolons and forms dense mats.

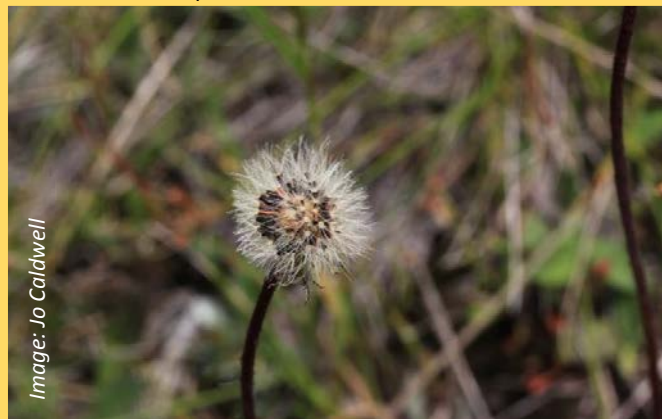


Under side of petals display rich red stripe.

**Distinguishing features:** Distinguished by stolons with long simple stiff hairs; leaves with margins entire to obscurely toothed, leaf under side lighter in colour; flower heads solitary at the end of each leafless stem; small strap-like petals, often with rich red stripe on the outer face; seeds cylindrical, ribbed, about 2 mm long and about 0.5 mm wide, with a flattened apex, ribs ending at the apex in minute points, top of seed with pale brown bristles to 6 mm long in one row.

This species has been recorded in Victoria, where control efforts are currently working toward eradication. Mouse-ear hawkweed was reported and confirmed at Strzelecki Creek (Main Range) in Kosciuszko National Park (KNP) in January 2015. The infestation is thought to have been brought in by bushwalkers (unknowingly) on clothing, boots or camping gear. Dispersal is mainly vegetative, where colonisation occurs through vigorous stolon and rosette production. Seed and plant material is transportable and viable if moved.

The infestation in KNP is currently under quarantine to prevent potential spread to other sensitive areas across the Main Range. A detection and control strategy has been put in place to survey and control this species.



Single seed head (10 mm in diameter) on stem up to 40 cm high.



Under side leaf, lighter in colour, rosettes form dense mats.

### **PREVENT THE SPREAD OF WEEDS:**

Weeds disperse by human and animal activity along with wind and water. Weed seed and plant material may stick to boots, clothing and equipment. Brush down boots, clothing and equipment prior to and after exploring the park to prevent the spread of weeds. Stay on formal tracks and camp in designated areas. Do not disturb or remove plant material as seed and stolons are easily transported and, if moved, may extend the distribution of hawkweed.

## ORANGE HAWKWEED (*Hieracium aurantiacum*)

Orange hawkweed originates from northern and central Europe. Like Mouse-ear hawkweed, it has colonised several countries where it threatens biodiversity and agricultural productivity. Orange hawkweed is also a Class 1 Noxious Weed in NSW.

**Description:** Perennial herb with bright orange flowers on stems up to 50 cm high. Leaves mostly basal and without a basal stalk (petiole), narrow-elliptic to broader above the middle, up to 15 cm long, both surfaces have coarse stiff long hairs (feels like paper). Stem with long spreading hairs, short whitish to black stiff hairs. Stolons are purple to cream in colour with nodes at intervals up to 2 cm apart (may have root fibres or leaf extending from nodes).

**Distinguishing features:** Stolons with numerous long simple hairs; leaves with margins entire to obscurely toothed along edge; flower heads of 3–15 in dense clusters on a stem with 0–4 leaves or branchlets; all small flowers (to 30 mm diameter), petals are strap-like and 5-toothed at tip. Leaf, stem and stolons secrete milky sap when cut.



Image: Jo Caldwell  
Orange hawkweed multiple bright orange flower heads.



Image: Jacki Hickson  
Seed head tufts (10 mm in diameter) on stem and branchlets.



Image: Jo Caldwell  
Develops hairy stem with branchlets and multiple flower heads. Hairy leaves form rosettes; joined via stolons and forms dense mats.



Image: Jo Caldwell  
Forms rosettes and dense mats via stolons linking plants.

Orange hawkweed was first recorded in NSW at Round Mountain in KNP. The infestation is thought to have originated from Ogilvie's Airstrip, once part of the Snowy Hydro-Electric Scheme development. Dispersal is similar to Mouse-ear hawkweed, where colonisation occurs through the introduction of seed or plant material and vigorous stolon and rosette production follows.

Orange hawkweed has also been recorded in Tasmania and Victoria. The Orange Hawkweed Control Program in KNP has had an extensive detection and control strategy in place for the last 5 years. The management of both hawkweed species will continue in order to protect the Alps and its neighbours from invasion. For more information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/OrangeHawkweed.htm>

### REPORT HAWKWEED:

If you see these species: record, photograph, mark (GPS if possible) and report any sightings. Do not remove plants.

As these species are Class 1 Noxious weeds, the local control authority must be notified within three days of becoming aware of any new locations. Notify relevant Local Control Authority and Weeds Hotline (Department of Primary Industry):

Phone: 1800 680 244 or

Email: [weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

 Office of Environment & Heritage  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service



 ERNWAG & WRNWAG

NEW SOUTH WALES  
WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM