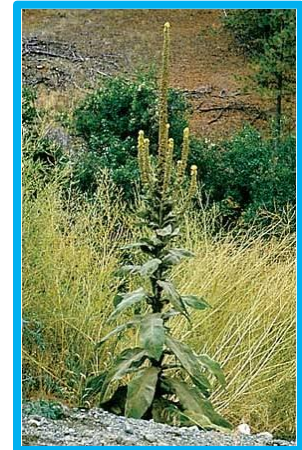
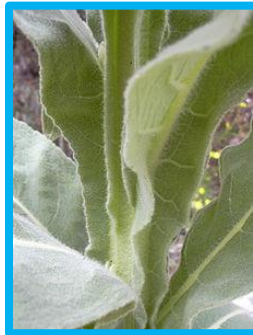




Common Mullein is a hairy biennial plant that can grow to 2 m or more tall and generally requires winter dormancy before it can flower. Its small yellow flowers are densely grouped on a tall stem, which bolts from a large rosette of leaves. It grows in a wide variety of habitats, but prefers well-lit disturbed soils, where it can appear soon after the ground receives light, from long-lived seeds that persist in the soil seed bank. It is a common weedy plant that spreads by prolifically producing seeds.



A given flower is open only for a single day, opening before dawn and closing in the afternoon. Flowering period lasts from June to August in most of its range, extending to September or October in warmer climates. On flowering plants the leaves are alternately arranged up the stem. They are thick and decurrent, with much variation in leaf shape between the upper and lower leaves on the stem, ranging from oblong to oblanceolate, and reaching sizes up to 19 inches long and 5 inches wide. They become smaller higher up the stem, and less strongly decurrent down the stem. The flowering stem is solid nearly an inch across. The dried stems may persist into the following spring or even the next summer. The seeds viability can last for decades, up to a hundred years, according to some studies. Because of this, and because the plant is an extremely prolific seed bearer, each plant produces hundreds of capsules, each containing up to 700+ seeds, with a total up to 180,000 or 240,000 seeds. Seeds germinate in spring and summer. Those that germinate in autumn produce plants that overwinter if they are large enough, while rosettes less than 5.9 in across die in winter. After flowering the entire plant usually dies at the end of its second year. The plant produces a shallow taproot.

Control of the plant by hand pulling and hoeing, preferably followed by sowing of native plants. Animals rarely graze it because of its irritating hairs. Herbicides are most effective when a surfactant is added, to help penetrate the hair covering the leaves.

County Impact- mullein is prevalent in many areas of the county. It is a problem on a few south facing open slopes on the Mountain and especially like shale or gravelly sites in the open range. It is manageable but requires persistence.



Crew member searching for mullein rosettes on a site in Crazy Woman Canyon

Treated site with old stems



Typical site with rosettes and seeding plants

