

St. Johnswort



flower



leaves



seeds

St. Johnswort

Genus: Hypericum

Species: perforatum

Priority Listing: 2B

Perennial

Biological control agents: Klamath weed beetles, St. Johnswort moth, and St. Johnswort root boring beetle

There are over 370 species of the genus Hypericum that exist worldwide in temperate and subtropical regions of North America, Europe, Turkey, Russia, India, China and Brazil.

St. Johnswort has long been used for its **medicinal** properties and is well suited to survive in dry, gravelly or sandy soils and likes sun. This plant is found in areas where the ground has been disturbed.

St. Johnswort is **toxic** to horses, cattle, and sheep, if eaten in large quantities, it can be fatal.

Stems have 2 ridges are a reddish color and have glands that appear as black dots. Leaves are yellow green in color, oval shaped and are 1" in length. The entire surface of the leaves are covered with tiny transparent dots, you can see these if you hold a leaf up to the light. These dots are glands where the plant's oils are contained.

Biological Control Agents: a method of controlling pests (including insects, mites, weeds and plant diseases) using other living organisms

Medicinal: having the properties of medicine; used a medicine

Perennial: a plant whose life spans several years

Toxic: poisonous quality based upon poisonous substances at the cellular level of organisms

Viable: capable of growing or developing

Flowers have 5 petals that are yellow with tiny glandular black dots.

Flowers form clusters at the end of stems; bloom occurs late spring to early mid-summer. The plant may have gotten its name because it usually blooms around the birthday of St. John the Baptist.

When the plant has set seed and died for the year, the whole plant turns a rust color. Seeds are grown in seed pods that are ¼" long and have 3 sections that produce many tiny dark brown seeds. One plant can produce as many as 100,000 seeds in one season!

St. Johnswort is difficult to control because it has the capability to reproduce by producing new plants from the buds on its roots and its seeds remain **viable** for long periods of time.



Seed Bead photo courtesy of Norman E. Rees, USDA-ARS