

Government of Alberta

Tall Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*)

Description

A perennial plant, with a thick rootstalk with numerous, spreading, coarse, fibrous roots. Stems are erect to 1 m, smooth, hollow, leafy below, and branched above. Basal and lower leaves are long-stalked, the blade deeply divided into 3-5 main lobes palmately arranged (like fingers from the palm of the hand), each of the lobes irregularly jagged or coarsely toothed. Middle leaves with similar shape but nearly stalkless. Upper leaves progressively smaller with fewer and smoother lobes. The base of each leafstalk flattened and partly surrounding the stem at each node. Flowers bright yellow, about 2-3cm in diameter, with 5 petals, grouped on long stalks in a much-branched inflorescence. Sepals are 5, green and small. After the petals fall, the cluster of seeds is nearly spherical with each seed about 3mm long, flattened, egg-shaped in outline with a short hooked tip.



CAUTION: Buttercups have an unpleasantly sharp, pungent, or bitter juice which causes severe pain and inflammation when grazed by livestock.

Key Identifiers

- ✓ Grows erect, 30-100 cm
- ✓ Lower and middle leaves are similar in appearance
- ✓ Leaf blades deeply lobed but not completely divided into 3-5 sections
- ✓ Distinct leaf stalks, flattened and partly surrounding stem

Location in Canada

Tall Buttercup is located in every Canadian province except for the Yukon.

Resources

<http://www.invasiveplants.ab.ca/Downloads/FS-TallButtercup.pdf>

<http://www.weedinfo.ca/weed.php?w=RANAC>

Similar species

Ranunculus spp. Tall buttercup can be distinguished from other buttercup species by its upright growth habit and deeply lobed and toothed leaves.