

Common Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)

Description

A biennial plant that can grow to 3 m in height. During the first year they are low-growing rosettes of bluish gray-green, with felt-like leaves that range up to 30 cm in length and to 13 cm in width. Leaves are alternate along the flowering stalks and are much larger toward the base of the plant. Mature conspicuous flowering plants are produced the second year. The five-petaled yellow flowers are arranged in a leafy spike and bloom a few at a time. The tiny seeds are pitted and rough with wavy ridges and deep grooves and can germinate after lying dormant in the soil for several decades (up to 100 years).

Key Identifiers

- ✓ Large white wooly leaves
- ✓ Second year stem has winged appearance
- ✓ Yellow flowers densely produced in a thick, wooly spike-like raceme.

Location in Canada

Common Mullien is located in all southern Canadian provinces, BC to Newfoundland.

Resources

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

http://www.ppws.vt.edu/scott/weed_id/vesth.htm

Similar species

Black Mullein (*Verbascum nigrum*) - flowers are darker, have blue/purple centers, and the main stalk is thinner, sometimes ragged-looking, ie, not straight. Also the leaves are very different, they are not fuzzy, are prominently veined, and are ovate.

Wooly/Orange Mullein (*Verbascum phlomoides*) is very similar to common mullein but the upper stem leaves do not or only shortly extend down the stem.



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