

Yellow nutsedge

Colorado Dept. of
Agriculture
Conservation Services
Division
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Key ID Points

1. Stout triangular stem.
2. Dark, unevenly globe-shaped, almond tasting tubers at the ends of slender rhizomes
3. Three ranked, grass like leaves.

Yellow nutsedge Identification and Management



Identification and Impacts

Yellow nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus*) is a warm season perennial, grass like species that is native to Europe. It is particularly noticeable in July and August when it grows more quickly than native species and stands out (visually) above the rest. The seeds are yellowish, triangular, and oblong. The root system, which is made up of tubers, can produce hundreds to thousands of tubers in a season per plant; the tubers can survive 3 to 4 years. Seedling stems are triangular in cross section with smooth, hairless leaves. Plants range from 6 to 30 inches tall, with 3 ranked leaves and triangled pithy stems. The leaves are grass like that originate from the base of each stem and are folded lengthwise. Long leaf-like bracts branch out from a common point just below the umbrella-like flower cluster. Flowers are yellowish-brown in color and appear from June to October. The entire cluster of flat spikelets is subtended by 3 to 9 leaf-like bracts and has up to 40 florets.

Yellow nutsedge favors low, moist areas and forms dense colonies. Habitats include: pastures, flood plains, dams, ditches, stream banks, roadsides, wet fields, wet prairies, and around lakes and ponds. The

plant is also troublesome in crops like potatoes, beans and corn where it reduces crop yield and quality by competing for light, water, and nutrients. Yellow nutsedge is a serious invader and is not controlled by common grass herbicides.

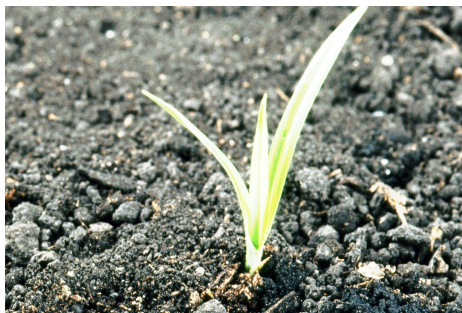
The key to effective control of Yellow nutsedge is not allowing the plant to form its tubers. Once the tubers are formed it becomes extremely difficult to control, even with herbicides. Hand pulling plants when they first appear, helps deplete the carbohydrates that supply the tubers growth. Herbicide treatments are an option if used when plants are young, generally in the spring. Details on the back of this sheet can help to create a management plan compatible with your site ecology.

Yellow nutsedge is designated as a "List B" species in the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. It is required to be either eradicated, contained, or suppressed depending on the local infestations. For more information visit www.colorado.gov/ag/csd and click on the Noxious Weed Management Program. Or call the State Weed Coordinator at the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, 303-239-4100.



Photos © (Clockwise from lower left): Richard Old, XID Services, Inc., Bugwood.org; Lynn Sosnoskie, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org; John Cardina, Ohio State University, Bugwood.org; and John D. Byrd, Mississippi State University, Bugwood.org.

Cyperus esculentus

**CULTURAL**

Yellow nutsedge acts like a grass, outcompeting is possible, but preventing the establishment of new infestations by minimizing disturbance, seed dispersal, eliminating seed production and maintaining healthy native communities. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service for seed mix recommendations.

**BIOLOGICAL**

Currently, there are no biocontrol agents available for Yellow nutsedge. Biocontrol takes many years of research and development. For more information, contact the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Insectary in Palisade, Colorado at 970-464-7916.

**MECHANICAL**

Hand pull when soil is moist before each lawn mowing to control Yellow nutsedge. Especially when plants are young, so as not to allow tubers to form.

Integrated Weed Management:

Mechanical and/or chemical control methods can be used to eliminate seed production and deplete the nutrient reserves in the rhizomatous root system (tubers). These control methods need to occur when the plants are young, generally in the spring time.

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HERBICIDES

NOTE: The following are recommendations for herbicides that can be applied to range and pasturelands. *Rates are approximate and based on equipment with an output of 30 gallons per acre. Always read, understand, and follow the label directions. The herbicide label is the LAW!*

HERBICIDE	RATE	APPLICATION TIMING
DSMA, MSMA, or MAMA (crabicides)		2 or 3 treatments in late June and July.
2,4-D		