



Yellow Toadflax



flowers



leaves



fruit

Yellow Toadflax

Genus: *Linaria*

Species: *vulgaris*

Priority Listing: 2B

Perennial

Biological control agents:

toadflax stem weevil, toadflax

seed capsule weevil, and

toadflax flower feeding beetle

Yellow toadflax is native to Europe, Asia, the United Kingdom, Spain, Siberia, and western China. Yellow toadflax grows along roadsides and disturbed and cultivated lands.

Historically, yellow toadflax was used as an **ornamental** and **medicinal** plant.

As an ornamental yellow toadflax was grown in children's gardens because of the whimsical shape of the flowers; the 'snapping' flowers can be made to 'talk' by squeezing them at the base.

As a medicinal the leaves of yellow toadflax were used to make tea which helped with digestive problems. It was also used as an **insecticide** which was made by boiling the leaves in milk. The mixture was then used to ward off pesky insects!

Yellow toadflax has alternate, narrow, pale green leaves that are about 2 1/2" long, which are pointed at both ends and have smooth edges. Yellow toadflax plant stems can grow to heights of 8" to 24".

The yellow toadflax flower is yellow and has a snapdragon-like orange throat that is about 1" to 1 1/4" long with a 1" long spur. The flowers grow in dense clusters on the top of short stalks and bloom from mid-summer to mid fall.

Because of the way the yellow toadflax flower is constructed only strong insects such as bees and Bumble bees can pry in between the upper and lower lip of the flower for pollination.

Yellow toadflax seeds are **encapsulated** in fruits. These fruits are brown, round to oval in shape, and contain two compartments where the seeds are produced. Seeds are dark brown to black, 1/10" in diameter, flat, and have a papery circular wing.

Yellow toadflax reproduces through both seeds and **rhizomes**. The **taproot** of a yellow toadflax plant may grow up to 3' long! Horizontal roots may grow to be several feet long and are capable of producing buds that can grow new plants.



Photo courtesy of Steve Dewey, USU, Bugwood.org

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

Encapsulated: enclosed in a protective coating or membrane

Insecticide: a substance used for killing insects

Medicinal: having the properties of medicine; used as a medicine

Ornamental: a plant that serves a purpose for ornament, or is grown for show

Perennial: a plant whose life spans several years

Rhizomes: a perennial underground stem that usually grows horizontally

Taproot: a main single root of a plant, generally growing straight down