

## Background

Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), also known as Common Wormwood, is an aggressive non-native invasive plant from northeast Asia and extreme northwestern Alaska. It was introduced to the United States at shipping ports via ship ballast and through contaminated nursery stock. Mugwort was first documented in the US in the 1820's. It is present throughout the eastern US and Connecticut.

Mugwort has recently been discovered in the Upper Farmington River corridor and is quickly spreading and forming large colonies. Eradication efforts are underway.

Mugwort usually appears first along roadsides where contaminated soil & machinery used by state and municipal road crews has been introduced. Plants also show up in gardens through contaminated topsoil, composted organic matter or nursery stock. It prefers full sun and dry soils. Mugwort spreads primarily by root-like structures (rhizomes); in this region viable seeds are rarely produced.

The Farmington River Coordinating Committee needs your help to report new populations and to help control existing ones!

### Resources

CT Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG)  
<http://cipwg.uconn.edu/>

USDA Plant Database  
<http://plants.usda.gov/>

Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE)  
<https://www.eddmaps.org/ipane/>

CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)  
(860) 424-3000



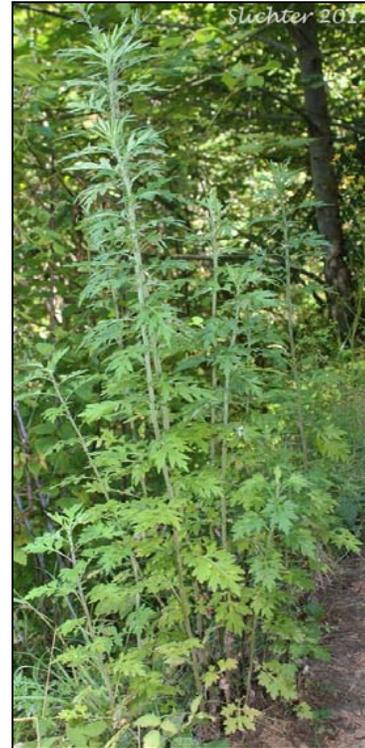
### **Farmington River Coordinating Committee**

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<http://www.farmingtonriver.org/>

## Mugwort

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?



What you need to know to prevent the spread of this non-native pest

### Why is Mugwort Considered Invasive?

Mugwort is a very fast spreading non-native herbaceous perennial that invades natural areas where it disrupts biological processes.

Plants spread by long, stout rhizomes (underground stems) that quickly become dense and persistent, making eradication very difficult. The resulting dense colony of leafy stems easily out-competes native plants important for pollinating insects and other wildlife.

Outside of its native range, Mugwort has no known natural predators. Native herbivores including insects are not known to feed on it.

# Description

### Size:

- Grows to 1.5-5 feet in length; habit is upright.

### Leaves:

- Pale green and divided.
- **Underside of leaf (is covered with white to gray woolly hair).**
- 1-3 inches long; lance-shaped.

### Other features:

- Stems are upright with the upper third branched.
- Flowers are small, greenish-yellow, in spike-like clusters at the top of stems.
- Flowers from July to October.
- It is a perennial.
- **Crushed leaves smell like Chrysanthemum.**

In winter, the dry flower stems are a common sight along roadsides.



### Please Note:

Mugwort is often confused with garden chrysanthemums since leaf shape and aroma are similar but they are easily distinguished by the underside of their leaves: those of Mugwort are white-wholly but garden chrysanthemum leaves are only slightly hairy.



Mugwort leaves

Young Mugwort plants (2-8 in.) can be mistaken for Common Ragweed, a native species. The leaves of Common Ragweed are deeply dissected while those of Mugwort are shallower.



Ragweed leaf

## Before Eradicating Mugwort from Your Property:

**If you suspect that you have found Mugwort, please contact the Farmington River Coordinating Committee. We may ask you to email us a digital image of the plant to confirm its identity and schedule a site visit so we can determine the extent of the infestation.**

**FRCC is tracking infestations, so please report plants. We can help you control and monitor the infestation to prevent plants from spreading.**

**Phone: (860) 379-0282**

### Online:

<http://www.farmingtonriver.org/>

**Early detection and rapid removal (EDRR) of this invasive grass is critical to prevent plants from invading the Upper Farmington River Wild and Scenic Corridor.**

**Herbicides tend not to be effective on Mugwort.**

# Eradication

**Pulling.** We have found that hand pulling is most effective on young patches as root systems are still small. Pulling should be regular throughout the growing season as rhizome fragments easily break off producing new plants. Watch for new shoots emerging from the soil until the end of the growing season. Large patches can be mowed and covered with black plastic. It is best to cover the colony early in the season before stems are produced. Make sure the cover extends at least 2 ft. beyond the edge of the colony. Secure the edges of the cover. Pull all emerging growth that may extend past the cover along its edges. The plastic should be kept in place for a few years to ensure that the Mugwort has been eliminated.

**Disposal.** Place pulled plants into a black plastic bag, seal and leave in the sun to heat and kill all plant parts.

**Mowing/Weed-whacking.** Cutting is the least effective method and only encourages rhizomes to spread. Use this technique if you already have a colony with mature stems. Cut stems as close to the ground as possible, then cover with black plastic.