

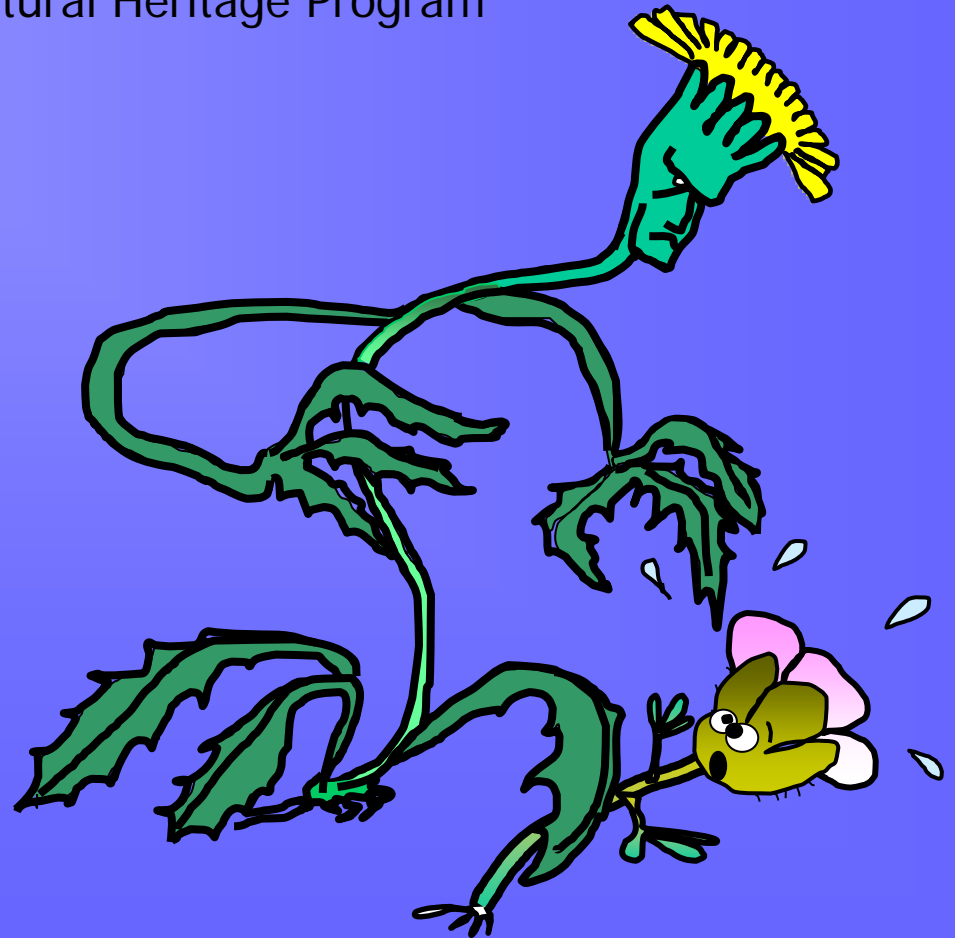
NON-NATIVE PLANTS OF ALASKA

Pea Family (Fabaceae)

Helen Cortes-Burns, Lindsey Flagstad, Matt Carlson and Irina Lapina

Botany Unit

The Alaska Natural Heritage Program



Legume Family (Fabaceae) Introduction

Legumes in Alaska are characterized by having compound leaves



trifoliate



pinnate

All trifoliate compound leaf legume species in Alaska are introduced



palmate



pinnate with tendrils

stipules



Melilotus spp. (leaves trifoliate **MARGIN TOOTHED 2/3 LEAF**
inflorescence elongated, not dense)



White sweetclover *Melilotus alba*
Invasiveness Ranking: 80 points



- biennial, 2 to 5 feet tall
- leaves compound with **3 leaflets**
- **flowers white**, fragrant

Yellow sweetclover *Melilotus officinalis*
Invasiveness Ranking: 65 points



- annual or biennial, 2 to 5 feet tall
- leaves compound with **3 leaflets**
- **flowers yellow**

Medicago spp. (leaves trifoliate **MARGIN TOOTHED ONLY AT TIP**
inflorescence globose)



Yellow alfalfa *Medicago sativa ssp. falcata*
Invasiveness Ranking: 64 points



1. Stem **decumbent or erect**
2. Leaves compound with **3 leaflets, toothed** only at **tip** (unlike *Melilotus* spp.)
3. Flowers **yellow in globular clusters**, 3/8-1/2" long
4. Pods **falcate** or nearly **straight**
5. Pods **2-5 seeded**

Black medic *Medicago lupulina*
Invasiveness Ranking: 48 points



1. stem **hairy, trailing**
2. leaves compound with **3 hairy leaflets**
3. flowers **yellow in globular clusters**, small 2/8" long
4. pods **kidney-shaped**
5. pods **1-seeded**, black when ripe

Medicago spp. (leaves trifoliate **MARGIN TOOTHED ONLY AT TIP**
inflorescence globose)



Alfalfa *Medicago sativa ssp. sativa*
Invasiveness Ranking: 59 points



1. stems erect or ascending
2. Flowers **purple**, up to 1/2" long, in globular cluster
3. Pods **spirally coiled 2-3 times**, 10-20 seeded

***Trifolium* spp.** (leaves trifoliate; inflorescence globular)



White clover *Trifolium repens*

Invasiveness Rank: 59 points



1. **creeping stems, rooting** at the nodes
2. leaflets often have **V marks**
3. flowers **white to pinkish white** in

Alsike clover *Trifolium hybridum*

Invasiveness Rank: 57 points



1. **upright stems**
2. **not rooting** at the nodes
3. **pinker flower**

Red clover *Trifolium pratense*

Invasiveness Rank: 53 points

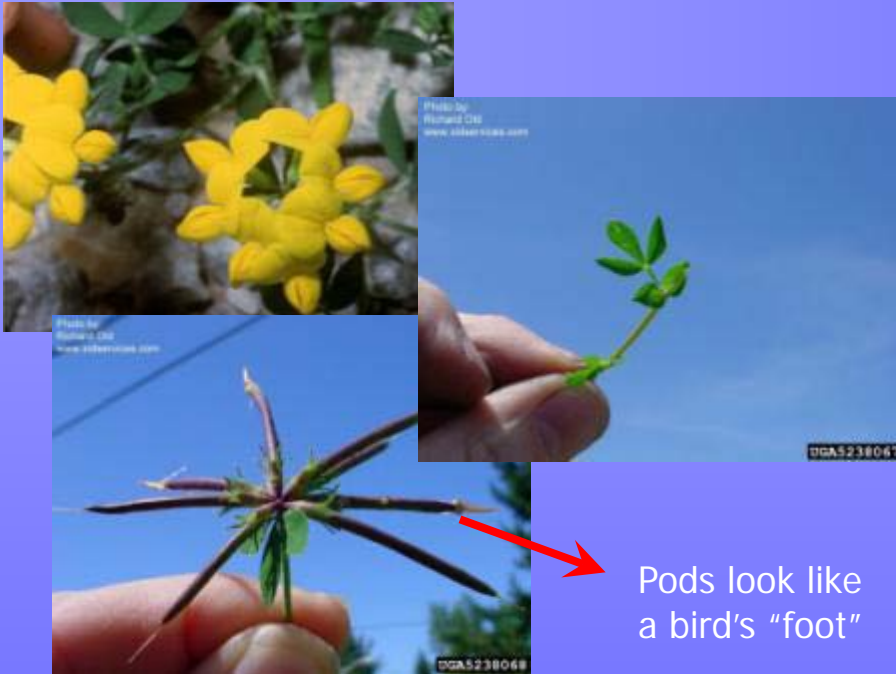


1. **reddish pink flowers** in a globe-shaped clusters
2. leaves **immediately below head**
3. leaflets often have **V marks**

All clovers in Alaska are introduced

Additional Legumes (leaves **pinnately** compound like bird vetch, **BUT** flowers in **globular clusters** like clovers and alfalfa)

Bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* L.



Pods look like a bird's "foot"

- **yellow** flowers in **globular** clusters on a long stalk
- leaves divided into **5 oval-linear leaflets**
central 3 larger ("fake" trefoil)
lower 2 resemble stipules
- **Pods** are brown-black, **cylindrical**

Crownvetch *Coronilla varia* (L.) Lassen



- Flowers **pink-white**
- Leaves **pinnately compound, NO tendril**
- Pods **constricted**

***Vicia* spp.** (leaves pinnately compound, ending in tendrils, stem not winged)

Bird vetch *Vicia cracca*

Rank: 73 points

1. **perennial** with **climbing or trailing stems**
2. stem **not winged**
3. leaves with **8-10 pairs of leaflets** and **branched tendrils**
4. flowers **bluish violet** in **dense, one-sided clusters** of **20-50 flowers**



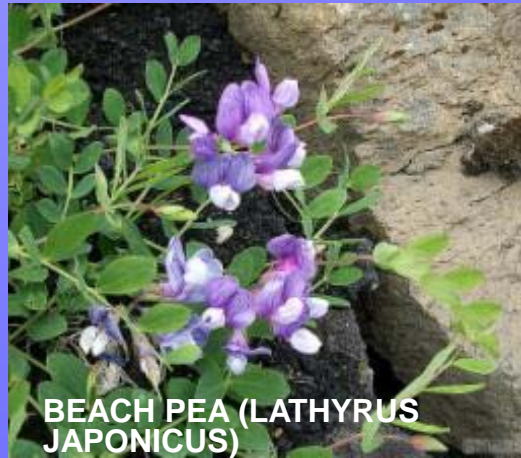
Native species that look like *Vicia cracca* (leaves pinnately compound, sometimes ending in tendril, stem sometimes winged)

- ❑ **native *Vicia* spp.** : either species with inflorescences > leaves or species with flowers on all sides of raceme, none in the Anchorage Bowl area
- ❑ ***Lathyrus* spp.:** winged stem, often leaf ending in tendrils
- ❑ ***Hedysarum* spp.:** no tendril, stem erect, legume articulated
- ❑ ***Astragalus* spp.** : no tendril, stem erect, legume not transversely articulated



MARSH PEA (LATHYRUS PALUSTRIS)

- stem trailing, strongly **winged**
 - **2-3 pairs of leaflets** (*V. cracca* has >3 pairs leaflets/leaf), terminal **tendrils**
 - **Leaflets long, narrowly lance-shape** (*V. cracca* has small, rounded leaflets),
 - wet meadows, forest understory
- Frequently confused with bird vetch!**



BEACH PEA (LATHYRUS JAPONICUS)

- Stem trailing, winged
- leaflets (few pairs) broadly ovate without tendrils
- sandy shores along the coast



HEDYSARUM ALPINUM

- stem erect, not climbing or trailing
- leaves odd pinnate, not ending with a tendril; leaflets broad lanceolate or oblong
- Legume articulated
- roadsides, rocky slopes, river bars, spruce forest, gravel bars



Additional Legumes (shrubs, leaves pinnately compound, flowers single, not in clusters)

Siberian pea-shrub *Caragana arborescens*

Invasiveness Ranking: 64 points



- shrub up to 10 feet tall
- leaves with **8-12 leaflets**, oblong to elliptic
- **spiny** stipules
- flowers yellow, borne **singly**

