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Common ragweed

Ambrosia artemisiifolia L.

Life cycle: Erect, branching summer annual.

Leaves: Cotyledons are thick and oval to spatula-shaped. Leaves are fernlike, once or twice compound and usually hairy. Upper leaves are alternate; lower leaves may be opposite or alternate with distinct petioles.

Stems: Usually hairy, erect and branched up to 6 feet tall.

Flowers and fruit: Flowers are generally inconspicuous, found on terminal branches. They produce prolific amounts of pollen. The seed is enclosed in a single-seeded, woody fruit with several spikes resembling a crown.

Reproduction: Seeds.



Common ragweed seedling.



Common ragweed flowering branch.

All photos this page: Steven A. Gower



Common ragweed leaf.

Common ragweed *continued...*

Similar weeds

Giant ragweed (*A. trifida* L.). Differs by having cotyledons three to four times larger; three- to five-lobed leaves opposite in arrangement; and a height that may reach 15 feet.

Western ragweed (*A. psilostachya* DC.). Differs by having a perennial nature with prolific creeping roots, densely hairy leaves and a height typically not above 4 feet.



Giant ragweed seedling and leaf.



Western ragweed root sprout and leaf.

