

# WHITE & YELLOW SWEET CLOVER

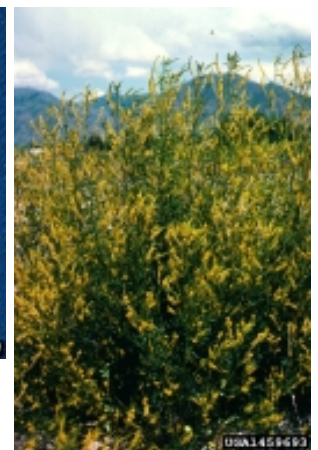
*Melilotus alba & officinalis*



Paul E. Berry, WI State Herbarium

Mature Height	3 to 5 feet	Soil Type	All types
Mature Spread	Colonizes	Flower Color	White or Yellow
Mature Form	Erect , Branching	Foliage Color	Green
Growth Rate	Moderate	Fall Color	Brown Stems
Sun Exposure	Full sun but tolerates some shade		
Soil Moisture	Prefers moist		

Both white and yellow sweet clovers are erect herbaceous biennial members of the pea family native to southern and central Europe and Asia. They were brought to the United States for animal forage and honey production in the 1600's. They are also used for soil enrichment crops because of their nitrogen fixing ability. First year plants are small, branched with three leaflets and are somewhat hard to find. During the second year the plants are easily seen because of their height and white or yellow flowers. Each plant is capable of producing over 300,000 seeds some of which stay viable in the soil for up to 30 years. Both sweet clovers shade out native sun loving plants. They are especially a problem in native prairies and savanna areas where they out compete natives for sunlight, nutrients and moisture. Prescribed burning for two consecutive years has been an effective control but burning only one year seems to result in increased stands. Pulling first year plants is effective. Foliar spray with a systemic herbicide containing glyphosate is best for larger areas. Care must be taken to prevent overspray on desired plants.



Steve Dewey Photos



This fact sheet was developed by the West Central Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) with funding by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. The CWMA consists of 27 western and central Indiana counties and strives to help land users identify and control invasive terrestrial plants through workshops, field days and other educational activities.

