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Western Ragweed *Ambrosia Psilostachya*

Family: Compositae
Tribe: Ambrosieae
Genus: Ambrosia
Species: psilostachya

Common Names: Western Ragweed

Pollen Grains: Spheroidal 22 to 25 microns in diameter. Spines slightly larger and more pointed than those of Short Ragweed. Germinal furrows three and four.

Pollinating Period: Mostly August to September. Some scattered flowering from June into November in milder areas.

Distribution: From Louisiana and Illinois westward into California, Idaho, and Saskatchewan.

Allergic Importance: Important where occurring in quantity.

Western Ragweed is a rough perennial 1 to 5 feet tall, arising from a slender creeping rootstock. This is the only allergically important species of *Ambrosia* that is perennial. Western Ragweed is similar in appearance to the Short Ragweed but is a harsher plant, the leaves and stems being rough and hairy. The leaves are mostly one pinnately divided; the upper leaves alternate, the lower usually opposite. Leaves are 2 to 5 inches long. Typical nodding flower heads are borne in dense, erect clusters. The staminate (male) heads are numerous and the pistillate (female) are few at the base of the staminate cluster.

Western Ragweed favors disturbed soil. It is commonly found on roadside and in waste ground. It seldom obtains the growth density of the Short and Giant Ragweed and also is of more scattered occurrence. It also falls far short of its eastern cousins as a pollen producer, but compared to most weeds it produces large amounts of pollen.