

RAGWEED

Disambiguation



Other common names include bursages and burrobrushes. The genus name is from the Greek ambrosia, the "food of the gods".

Ragweed pollen is notorious for causing allergic reactions in humans, specifically allergic rhinitis. Up to half of all cases of pollen-related allergic rhinitis in North America are caused by ragweeds. A single plant may produce about a billion grains of pollen per season, and the pollen is transported on the wind. It causes about half of all cases of pollen-associated allergic rhinitis in North America, where ragweeds are most abundant and diverse.

Ragweed pollen can remain airborne for days and travel great distances, affecting people hundreds of miles away. It can even be carried 300 to 400 miles (640 km) out to sea. Ragweeds native to the Americas have been introduced to Europe starting in the nineteenth century and especially during World War I, and have spread rapidly there since the 1950s. Eastern Europe, particularly Hungary, has been badly affected by ragweed since the early 1990s, when the dismantling of Communist collective agriculture led to large-scale abandonment of agricultural land, and new building projects also resulted in disturbed, un-landscaped acreage.