



NuisanceNews

A quarterly publication from the Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement Department

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Busy Summer for Ada County WPM

Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement participated in several events during the summer in an effort gain more public exposure and create more public awareness.



National County Government Day was held in May. Our Education Trailer was on display at the Ada County Courthouse giving people an inside look into county government.

The season started in April as we participated in an Earth Day Celebration at the Boise Watershed Educational Center. This family event takes place one Saturday every month and we will be back.



The parade season started in June. We participated in the Dairy Days Parade in Meridian, Eagle Funs Days Parade in July, and the Kuna Days parade in August.

During Mosquito Awareness Week we parked our trailer at two local parks and provided mosquito awareness education to the public. Kids enjoyed the hands on exhibits, swimming larvae, and free candy.



Towards the end of August we were set-up at the Western Idaho Fair. This is one of our biggest events of the year and once again we were well received as the event drew 1,306 visitors. Free ice water, canopies for shade, straw bails to sit on, and lots of information made the event a success.



Hunter Education at Cabela's

In an effort to raise public awareness on noxious weeds and how they spread, WPM reached out to some of those who frequent the outdoors the most and who may come across these invasive weeds. On Saturday, October 25th, Ada County WPM set up a booth inside Cabela's to target hunters and educate them on how they may inadvertently be spreading noxious weeds. We focused on the importance of staying on trails and cleaning their clothing, equipment, tires, camping gear, and animals. Making sure they are weed and seed free before



leaving the area. People don't realize that many of the noxious weed infestations in Idaho were probably caused by humans. Seeds attach themselves to many things and if not cleaned properly can be deposited to other areas. An aggressive noxious weed can completely take over a hillside in just a few short years. Places that were once considered great hunting grounds are no longer accessible because of the dense population of weeds and the animals that used to live in that area have left because their food source has been contaminated. Once a noxious weed becomes established its difficult to control, but following a few simple steps can help prevent that weed from spreading to other locations.

Have You Seen This Noxious Weed?



Dalmatian Toadflax

Dalmatian Toadflax is a short-lived, perennial herb that produces yellow snapdragon type flowers. The plant is easy to identify due to its long, erect appearance and waxy coating. Stems can reach a height of four feet and tap roots can reach as deep as ten feet. The plant will also produce lateral roots that can extend out from the parent plant for ten to twelve feet.

Dalmatian toadflax is a strongly competitive plant and causes negative impacts in pastures, rangelands, and natural areas, where it outcompetes natives or other desirable species for nutrients.

Seeds are ½ inch capsules that contain smaller dark seeds with papery wings. These seeds remain viable for up to ten years and over its lifetime, a single plant can produce up to 500,000 seeds.

This plant contains an iridoid glycoside, a quinoline alkaloid, and a peganine so it is toxic to some livestock such as cattle. However, cattle avoid Dalmatian toadflax and there have been no confirmed reports of livestock poisoning.

Two New Starthistles Added To Idaho's State Noxious Weed List

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture designated the weeds Purple starthistle and Iberian starthistle as noxious, and added them to the "Early Detection/Rapid Response" list of noxious weeds in Idaho.

In coordination with the Twin Falls County Weed Superintendent, ISDA staff inspected the site of a potential infestation of Purple and Iberian starthistle in Twin Falls County. Through testing, the ISDA has confirmed the infestation and acknowledged that these weeds were not previously found in Idaho.

Purple starthistle and Iberian starthistle are very close relatives and look very similar. Both species are non-native plants and have demonstrated they are aggressive in lower bottom lands and irrigated pastures and lowlands, and have been known to invade dry forests and grasslands. The main difference between the two species is that Iberian starthistle seeds are topped by a crown of bristles, while Purple starthistle seeds are hairless.

Purple and Iberian starthistle both have negative impacts on grazing and agriculture. They can overtake forage and other useful plant species. In addition, both bear sharp spines which are a deterrent to grazing animals, and livestock will not eat hay and straw that is infested with Purple or Iberian starthistle. As a result, the value of the forage decreases. Also, the stout sharp spikes of these plants create physical barriers, impacting recreationists, hunters, livestock and wildlife.

Purple and Iberian starthistle have the potential to become widely established in Idaho and could carry significant impact to agriculture and the environment. By designating them as noxious weeds in Idaho and adding them to the Early Detection/Rapid Response list, appropriate control measures can be implemented.

Source: Idaho State Department of Agriculture

Please call Ada County Weed Control if you come across these weeds: (208) 577-4646



Purple starthistle



Iberian starthistle

Hard Work, Hot Days, & Late Nights 2014 Mosquito Season Comes To An End



The 2014 mosquito season and the fight against West Nile virus came to an end in September. We set traps at a 130 locations around the county and caught just over 50,000 mosquitoes. We had 50 positive pools for West Nile virus at 34 different trap locations with Star, Eagle and Meridian being the hot spots. Once a trap tests positive for West Nile virus, mosquito abatement efforts go into high gear. Standing water in those areas are inspected for mosquito larvae and treated if necessary, and mosquito fogging takes place that same night to eliminate the adult population. Our Integrated Mosquito Management plan (IMM) worked well this summer as no human cases of West Nile virus were reported in Ada County.

We set new traps this summer including gravid traps (a trap baited with an awful smelling mixture of grass clippings, water, and brewers yeast) and elevated traps. Gravid traps are made to trap gravid female mosquitoes, meaning mosquitoes that just had a blood meal. The *Culex pipiens* species are attracted to this stinky water where they will deposit their eggs. These mosquitoes have a higher chance of carrying West Nile virus. Elevated traps were also used this summer as an experiment to catch more *Culex pipiens* higher in the canopy of a tree, where they can easily feed on birds.

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