



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

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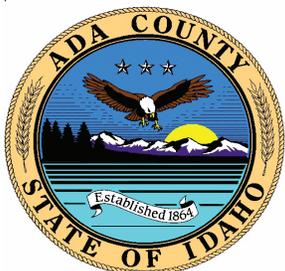
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## WPM Conducts Aerial Mosquito Spraying



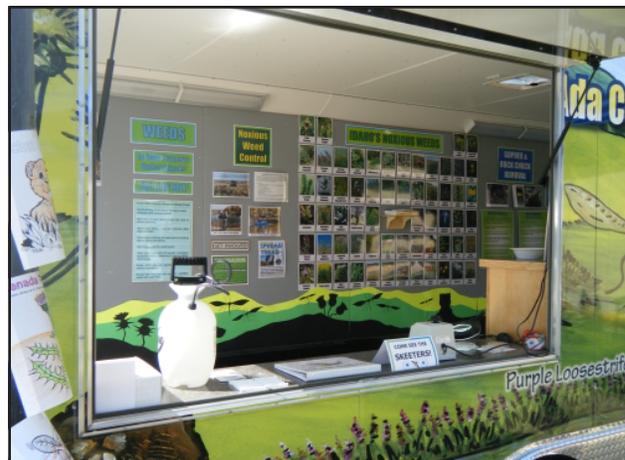
*Workers for Vector Disease Control prepare their plane for the August 22nd aerial pesticide application.*

For the first time since 2006 Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement conducted an aerial mosquito spray to help combat the threat of West Nile virus. On Thursday night, August 22nd an aerial application treated just over 24,000 acres in Meridian, Star and parts of Eagle. In this area 36 mosquito samples collected at 26 trapping locations contained mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus. The minimum infection rate (MIR) of those samples was five times the level for which the state recommends advanced treatment methods such as aerial spraying.

The decision to aerial spray was not made lightly. Careful consideration was made before deciding to implement such a treatment, including the risk to people, pets, livestock, beneficial insects, and organic farms. Vector Disease Control, the same company who conducted the aerial spraying back in 2006, was again chosen for this application. Vector Disease Control has 20 years of experience in the mosquito control industry and has done similar applications all over the world. The pesticide used was Dibrom Concentrate and was chosen because it poses no risk to humans, pets, livestock, and crops when applied at the recommended rate of just one-half (1/2) a fluid ounce per acre. It's a registered pesticide with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and is labeled for applications over residential and agricultural areas. It's regularly used for mosquito control across the United States.

Since the application mosquito numbers have significantly dropped in those areas. Mosquito Abatement ground crews will continue to monitor the area and treat when necessary. WPM would like to remind the public that this is a routine mosquito abatement method used all over the country and may be implemented again in the future.

# 2013 Western Idaho Fair Recap



The first opportunity to view our new education trailer was at this year's Western Idaho Fair. The fair ran from August 16th through August 25th and 1,262 people stopped by and said hello. We were located just north of the Agriculture Pavilion and next to the small animal barn. It was a great location and the trailer was loaded with information on noxious weeds, gophers, rock chucks and mosquitoes. We had a coloring station, live mosquito larvae, and a microscope where kids could look at different species of mosquitoes. It was a chance for our staff to interact with the public by answering questions and having conversations about the services we provide and how we might be able to help them. Some of the more popular discussion topics were puncturevine, West Nile virus, trapping gophers, mosquito fogging, and why a plant with such pretty flowers is considered noxious. Some people stopped by to get out of the sun, some came to rest on our hay bails, others really appreciated the free ice water. It was a great time and fun atmosphere. We learned some things along the way and look forward to participating again next year.

## Have You Seen This Noxious Weed?



### Hydrilla

Hydrilla is an aquatic weed that is native to Asia and was introduced to America as an aquarium plant. It is considered the most problematic aquatic weed in the United States and is found in canals, rivers, ponds, and lakes. A part of the waterweed family, this highly aggressive plant can grow up to twenty five feet from the floor to the surface where it will form dense mats. Hydrilla also produces tiny white flowers on long stalks. Hydrilla greatly slows water flow and clogs irrigation canals, interferes with boating, fishing, and swimming, and can also alter water chemistry and oxygen levels. It needs very little sunlight to grow, overwinters very well and if left untreated can completely take over an underwater environment eliminating native plant and animal life.

# Goatheads: What's The Point?



If you live in Ada County chances are you have come across a goathead at one time or another. Whether you found it in your bike tire or in your foot, goatheads seem to make themselves known when you least expect it. These pesky, and sometimes painful, seed pods are formed by the noxious weed puncturevine. Unfortunately, with the over abundance of puncturevine in our county, random encounters with goatheads will continue. However, there are things we can do to control puncturevine and significantly reduce plants in the future.

Puncturevine is a very aggressive and resilient noxious weed that can grow up to five feet wide with a tap root that can reach eight feet deep and seeds that can remain viable for up to five years.

Successful control of puncturevine first relies on the elimination of the “seed bank”. Plants and seeds from previous years should be gathered and discarded. A pre-emergent herbicide, such as Telar XP, should then be applied in the early spring. Rain fall will help move the herbicide into the soil and then to the weeds root system. Treating puncturevine at the rosette stage in early summer will help prevent puncturevine from maturing and producing more goatheads. If the plant does become more established and there are grasses in the area that you do not wish to harm, puncturevine is very susceptible to products containing 2,4-D. On driveways, sidewalks or other areas where you wish to have bare ground, herbicides containing Glyphosate, like Roundup, are effective.

Please note that it may take a few years to successfully eliminate an infestation of puncturevine. Repeating this process annually will help manage the puncturevine seed bank.

As with any herbicide it is very important to read the label carefully before making any kind of application. Inappropriate application can kill desirable vegetation and may violate federal law.

## Fall Residual Herbicide Applications Scheduled For October

In October, WPM will begin scheduling fall residual herbicide applications. Some of the most troublesome noxious weeds stay green well into fall, sending nutrients to their root systems and storing them for spring. A fall residual herbicide application helps to hinder that process by killing most broadleaf weeds in the fall which will help reduce weed control needs in the spring. Applying a fall residual makes it very difficult for a weed to overwinter, and the seedlings next spring will be less vigorous and easier to control. Call us today at 208-577-4646 to schedule your fall residual herbicide application and get a head start on next year's noxious weed control.

# NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL

Be smart and safe when using weed control products.

When weeds are big and time is short, there is a temptation to take short cuts when applying weed killers. This is a bad idea. Herbicides are designed to work effectively and safely only when used according to the instructions on the label. It is also against the law (as well as common sense) to use a weed killer in a way not described on the label, and that includes organic products like vinegar or clove oil. If the label says wear chemical resistant gloves and eye protection, please do that. If the label says keep the spray away from open water, be extra careful not to get it anywhere near the river or lake. If the label says dilute to 2% in water and spray actively growing plants, do that. Don't get creative and double the dose, pour it down the hollow stems, or spray the dirt after you pull the weeds – these things probably won't work and might be very unsafe. If you ever have trouble understanding how to interpret a label, contact the manufacturer or your local noxious weed department.



*Article courtesy of King County Noxious Weed Department*

## Gophers and Rock Chucks What to Expect This Winter



Gophers are very well suited for winter conditions and do not hibernate. They are well protected in their underground burrows and eat the food they stored in caches during the summer months. Since the majority of their food is roots, there may still be food available and digging may be the only way to get to it. If the ground freezes their digging will slow down but once the temperatures begin to rise, digging will resume.

Rock Chucks, on the other hand, do hibernate. In fact, 60% of their life is spent hibernating. Rock Chucks have two dormant periods, they aestivate in late summer, wake up in the fall, and hibernate the rest of the winter. A male rock chuck will dig a burrow soon after he wakes from hibernation and will begin looking for a mate. Your property is safe from rock chuck damage in the winter, but once spring arrives, rock chucks will wake up hungry and ready to reproduce.

