



Ada County May 2011

Pest of the Month

A quick guide to identifying and controlling invasive plants and animals found in the county

SPOTTED KNAPWEED

Spotted Knapweed A highly aggressive biennial or short-lived perennial plant. It grows up to three feet tall with a sturdy taproot and white or pink-purple flowers that grow solitary on branch tips. The bract below the flower has a comb-like fringed margin with a black tip. It reproduces by seeds, and one plant can produce 25,000 seed. Spotted Knapweed is particularly aggressive since it is allelopathic—it produces a natural herbicide called “catechin” that eradicates plants around it. Spotted Knapweed grows on rangelands, dry meadows, pastures and along roadsides or in sandy or gravelly floodplains.



Quick Facts



Historical records indicate that Spotted Knapweed was introduced from Eastern Europe into North America in the early 1900s as a contaminant in crop seed. In its first year, Spotted knapweed grows as a rosette, and will flower in following years. It now infests several million acres of grazing land in the northwestern United States and Canada. The noxious weed has deeply lobed leaves covered with short grayish hairs. Leaves are dense at the plant's base but become more thinly distributed and smaller as they advance up the stem.

How To Control

As with all noxious weeds, Spotted knapweed is easiest to control as a small young plant (pictured right). Follow an integrated pest management plan (using mechanical, cultural and chemical control) to most effectively eliminate an infestation.

MECHANICAL CONTROL: Hand pulling can be effective on small infestations. Due to the plant's toxicity, wear gloves to prevent skin irritation. Spotted knapweed has an extensive and deep root system, so ensure you remove the entire crown and taproot to prevent any regrowth.



See other control methods on other side...

How to Control



CULTURAL CONTROL: Ensure you follow up any form of mechanical and/or chemical control methods with cultural control tactics such as planting healthy, competitive and desirable vegetation where the infestation once grew. That will greatly reduce the possibility of reinfestation. Monitor the area for several years to ensure lingering seeds don't sprout new growth.

CHEMICAL CONTROL: Use a herbicide that includes one or a combination of the following active ingredients and for best results apply during the suggested timeframe.

Triclopyr + Clopyralid	Mid-March through June
Picloram	Mid-March through July and late August through October
Clopyralid + 2,4-D	April through early June
Clopyralid	Mid-March through the end of May
2,4-D	Mid-March through the end of May
Glyphosate	April through May
Aminopyralid	Mid-March through May and late August through October

Note: Chemical control of any weed can be difficult and confusing. If you are not experienced in chemical control or do not understand the product label, you should consult a licensed applicator to assist you. Inappropriate application can kill desirable vegetation, and may violate federal law.



For questions or concerns, please contact :

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