



Ada County Pest of the Month

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



Quick Facts



- **Name:** Common Cuprina (*Crupina vulgaris* Cass.) also known as the bearded creeper.
- **Found:** Dry south slopes, pastures, canyons, rangelands, roadsides, wastelands, forested and riparian areas.
- **Briefly:** Native of the Mediterranean Introduced to North America less than 30 years ago and first discovered in Idaho. Common Crupina is exclusively found in the Pacific Northwest.

Identification

Common Cuprina is a winter annual with erect openly branched flowering stems . One to three feet tall at maturity, Rosette leaves oblong covered with short stiff spines giving leaves a rough texture when touched. The main stem terminates in one to several short flowering branches, and additional flowering branches originate in upper leaf axils. One to five flower heads produced on each branch. Heads are slender and urn shaped, topped with pink, lavender or purple flowers. A distinct ring of dark bristles encircle the broad end of the seed giving the appearance of a fishing dry fly.



How To Control



Common Crupina is an aggressive invader from the same botanical family as the knapweeds and yellow star thistle. Since seeds are the only reproductive mechanism and are relatively short lived (less than three years), the probability of eradication is higher than some other noxious weeds. Prevention of new plant establishment and seed production is always the best control method. Maintaining healthy, competitive grasses is the best deterrent to a Crupina invasion.

More control methods continue on the next page

Control...Continued



Mechanical control may be limited on steep slopes or rugged terrain. Hand pulling, hoeing, or tillage before flowering will be effective for controlling small infestations. These areas should be checked every couple of weeks in the spring for newly emerged plants. Mowing is not recommended as a control strategy as this may increase seed dispersal.

There are currently no biological agents approved for use on Common Crupina. Most grazing animals will avoid this weed unless no other plants are available. Viable seed may also pass through the digestive system of cattle horses and deer. Therefore horses and cattle should be quarantined in holding pens if they have been foraging in Common Crupina infested range areas.

Since other control strategies are limited, herbicides may be the most effective means for eradicating larger infestations. Retreatment may be necessary for two to three years to ensure seed bank depletion.

Photos courtesy of Bugwood.org and Forestryimages.org



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 us:

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