

Russian Knapweed

BOTANICAL NAME: *Rhaponticum repens*

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? Russian Knapweed forms a bush up to 3 feet tall. The lower leaves are up to 4 inches long with a deeply lobed margin, the upper leaves are smaller and have a smooth margin. The flowers are solitary at the end of the branched shoots, and they have an "urn" shape covered in overlapping papery bracts. The flowers are pink,



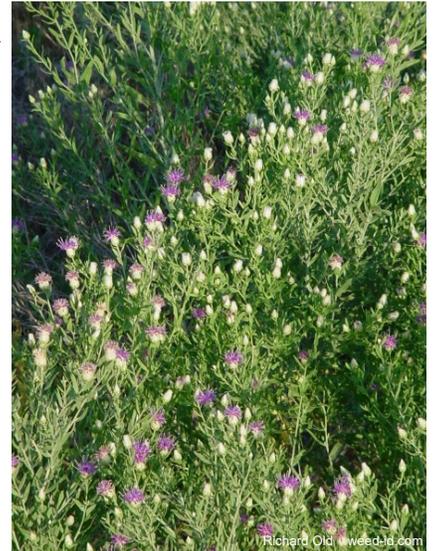
John M Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org

purple, or white, and the bracts lack the black tips found on Spotted Knapweed. It has vertical and horizontal roots with a dark, scaly appearance.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD? Russian Knapweed reproduces not only by seed but also through reproductive buds on its creeping horizontal roots. Additionally, it is allelopathic, meaning it releases a chemical into the soil to prevent other plants from germinating. Because of this, it is very competitive and chokes other species out over time to form a monoculture.

WHY IS IT A NOXIOUS WEED? It aggressively invades pastures and farm fields. It out-competes desirable vegetation and if grazed causes chewing disease in horses.

HOW DO I CONTROL IT? See the reverse side for information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control options for Russian Knapweed. Also see our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides. Questions? Contact:



Richard Old, weed-id.com



Richard Old, weed-id.com

Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control
10905 N. Ramsey Road
Hayden, ID 83835
208-446-1290

kcnoxioussweeds@kcgov.us or www.kcweeds.com

Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208)446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.

How to Control Russian Knapweed

Meadow Knapweed is a perennial that reproduces by seed as well as creeping root shoots. Control is accomplished by attacking the root system as well as preventing seed production.

Mechanical Hand pulling can control seedlings but established plants with developed root systems will resprout. Mowing does not control it but actually stimulates shoot development. Tillage only spreads root fragments that will then resprout.

Cultural The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Russian Knapweed is sensitive to competition for light, so planting a taller shade crop can be a good control tool.

Biological There is a mite and a gall nematode that can help stress Russian Knapweed but do not eliminate it. Contact Nez Perce Biocontrol Center for more information (208)843-9374 or nezpercebiocontrol.com.

Chemical **See our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.*

- **Aminopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Milestone**. It is broadleaf selective (safe on grasses) and has a long residual. It can be effective on Russian Knapweed when applied during the bud stage through the end of the season.
- **Clopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Transline** and Stinger. It is broadleaf selective, safe on most conifer trees, and can be effective on Russian Knapweed when applied in spring during the bud stage through the end of the season.
- **Chlorsulfuron** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Telar XP**. It is mostly broadleaf selective (safe on most perennial grasses) and can be effective on Russian Knapweed when applied during the bud or flowering stage.
- **Metsulfuron Methyl** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Escort XP**. It is mostly broadleaf selective (safe on most perennial grasses) and can be effective on Russian Knapweed when applied during the bud or flowering stage.

Chemical recommendations are based on University of Idaho Extension Bulletin 865 [Idaho's Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines Noncrop and Rangeland Sites](#), the book [Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States](#) published by UC Davis Weed Research & Information Center, and herbicide labels.