



Diffuse Knapweed

BOTANICAL NAME: *Centaurea diffusa*

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Diffuse Knapweed starts as a flat rosette of deeply lobed leaves. The stems that emerge branch many times to form a round bush 1 to 3 feet tall, generally shorter than Spotted Knapweed. The upper leaves are linear with smooth edges,



and they become longer and more deeply lobed as you move down the plant. The stems and leaves are covered in short gray hairs. The flowers are generally white, sometimes pink or pale purple, and have the typical Knapweed urn shaped base with overlapping bracts. The bracts have a spine extending upward and have comb-like spines along their edges. Diffuse Knapweed grows from a taproot.



HOW DOES IT SPREAD? Diffuse Knapweed reproduces by seed only. 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? Remember the best long term weed control is to get your desirable plants thriving, so seed and fertilize your native grasses. See reverse side for detailed information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control options for Diffuse Knapweed. Also check our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on herbicide use.

For more information, call: **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 Diffuse Knapweed

Diffuse Knapweed reproduces by seed but can also regrow from the root crown.

Mechanical Digging/pulling can be effective but the top 2-4 inches of taproot must be removed if possible. This must be repeated throughout the season and for multiple seasons. Mowing will not control Knapweeds.

Cultural The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Killing weeds is only one step, you have to also replace them with something good. Seed and fertilize so your grass can take nutrients away from the weeds and not leave available open soil for new weeds to germinate.

Biological Several biocontrol agents are available for Knapweed species. Contact Nez Perce Biocontrol Center for more information (208)843-9374 or nezpercebiocontrol.com.

Chemical * See our *Chemical Treatment* handout for more information.

- **Aminopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Milestone**. It is broadleaf selective (safe on grasses) and very effective on Knapweed and Thistle species when applied during the rosette to bolting stages. It has no grazing restrictions.
- **Clopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Transline**. It is broadleaf selective, and also safe on most conifer trees. It can be very effective on Knapweed species if applied in spring during the bolting stage.
- **Picloram** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Tordon 22K**. It is broadleaf selective and very effective, but it is federally restricted so it requires a license to buy and apply.

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.