

DIFFUSE KNAPWEED

Centaurea diffusa

Asteraceae, the sunflower family

Category: Containment

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FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Diffuse knapweed is a rangeland weed that has prolific seed production, tumbleweed characteristics, and vigorous germination that aid in its rapid dispersal.
- The plant displaces native species and is unpalatable to livestock, reducing grazing quality.
- It can tolerate a wide range of soil and environmental conditions and seed germination is stimulated by fire.

Description

- Annual, biennial, or short-lived perennial growing to 3 feet tall.
- Produces single upright stem with many branches, giving it a ball-shaped profile.
- Plants are a muted sage-green and may appear dusty from a distance.
- Flowers are most often white, but can be lavender to light-pink, or mixed on the same plant.
- Each floral bract is tipped with a long, slender spine and fringed with smaller spines.
- 1/2 inch long urn-shaped seed heads have stiff, sharp bract tips.

Introduction and Movement

- Diffuse knapweed is native to western Asia and southeastern Europe and was likely introduced as a seed contaminant.
- Inhabits disturbed sites such as rangeland, pastures, sandy river shores, and gravel banks.
- It can easily spread through seed dispersal via wind, water, and becoming lodged in vehicles.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Diffuse knapweed and eradicate infestations on your property.
- Always remove and properly dispose of all seed and plant materials on vehicles, clothing, shoes and pets before you exit or enter outdoor recreational sites.
- Always Remember To: **KNOCK IT OFF!**

Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/12039>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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DIFFUSE KNAPWEED DISTRIBUTION MAP

