

HOUNDSTONGUE

Cynoglossum officinale
Boraginaceae, the borage family

Category: Containment

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Houndstongue is an herbaceous weed that outcompetes natives species and agricultural crops for space and nutrients, reducing biodiversity.
- It is poisonous to livestock if ingested and infestations reduce the availability of forage grasses.

Description

- Biennial that can grow up to 4 feet tall.
- It has rough, hairy leaves that resemble a hound's tongue.
- Produces a thick, woody taproot.
- 5-petalled flowers are a dull reddish-purple in color, and are present in axils of upper leaves.
- Seeds are nutlets with flat surface, densely covered with small, barbed hooks (glochidia) that facilitate long-distance dispersal by human and animals vectors.
- Each flower can produce up to 4 seeds.

Introduction and Movement

- Houndstongue is native to Europe and was introduced as a seed contaminant.
- Inhabits disturbed areas, roadsides, rangelands, forest margins, and riparian zones.
- The velcro-like seeds allow for easy dispersal by attaching to human and animal vectors such as clothing, shoes, pets, livestock, and wildlife.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Houndstongue 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/14550>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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