RUSSIAN KNAPWEED

Acroptilon repens
Asteraceae, the sunflower family

Category: Control

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Russian knapweed is a highly invasive plant that forms large monocultures that reduce biodiversity and crop yields.
- It is toxic to horses, causing chewing disease and degrading forage quality of rangelands.
- In Idaho, Russian knapweed has threatened multiple rare species such as Spalding's silene, Smallhead goldenweed, sagebrush Mariposa lilv. and Idaho hawksbeard.

Description

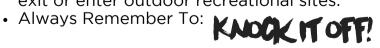
- Branched perennial growing up to 3' tall.
- Blue-green leaves are toothed and covered with fine hairs. Upper leaves are strap-like with entire margin.
- White, pink, or lavender-blue disk flowers with urn-shaped flower heads form on branch tips. Bracts are rounded and tipped with a pointed, papery edge.
- Ivory or pale-gray achenes are tipped by plumes.

Introduction and Movement

- Russian knapweed in native to Eurasia and was accidentally introduced to the U.S. as a seed contaminant.
- Inhabits cultivated fields, irrigation ditches, pastures, roadsides, and disturbed areas.
- Birds and rodents eat the seeds and likely transport them to new locations. Seeds can also be dispersed by the wind and by hitching a ride on shoes, vehicles, and animals.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Russian 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.



Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/2946
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf.







RUSSIAN KNAPWEED DISTRIBUTION MAP

