

# RUSSIAN KNAPWEED

*Acroptilon repens*

Asteraceae, the sunflower family

Category: Control

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## 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 lily, 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 is 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.
- Always Remember To: **KNOCK IT OFF!**



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John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org



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#### 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>.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: [INVASIVESPECIES.IDAHO.GOV](http://INVASIVESPECIES.IDAHO.GOV)  
TO REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES IN IDAHO, PLEASE CALL 1-877-336-8676.

# RUSSIAN KNAPWEED DISTRIBUTION MAP

