

# VIPERS BUGLOSS

*Echium vulgare*

Boraginaceae, the borage family

Category: Control

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## FACTSHEET INFORMATION

### Summary of Invasiveness

- Vipers bugloss competes with more valuable pasture species, decreasing forage values.
- It is highly adaptable to different environments and benefits from disturbances such as cultivation, grazing, and fire.
- The plant has alkaloids that are toxic to horses and pigs.

### Description

- Winter annual or biennial growing up to 3 feet tall.
- Basal rosette leaves are oval and stalked, stem leaves are narrowly lance-shaped, covered with bristly hairs with swollen bases, and have white 'speckles' giving a dimpled appearance.
- Purplish-blue, funnel-shaped, flowers with external hairs form at end of coiled flower stem.
- Each flower has 4 blackish nutlets with wrinkled surfaces.
- Resembles Small bugloss which is shorter with distinct curve in floral tubes, and Common bugloss which has linear leaves and hairs without swollen bases.

### Introduction and Movement

- Vipers bugloss is native to southern Europe and was introduced to the U.S. as a garden ornamental.
- Inhabits disturbed sites, roadsides, pastures, and grasslands.
- Seeds can easily spread via water in areas where plants grow near streams. They can also be spread due to agriculture practices as a contaminant in agriculture products or via attaching to vehicles, equipment, and the hooves or wool of livestock.

### Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Vipers bugloss and eradicate infestations on your property.
- When gardening, always research plants before planting and only purchase seeds from licensed nurseries.
- 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: **KNOW WHAT YOU GROW & KNOCK IT OFF!**

#### Sources

- CAB International Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/20400>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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

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## DISTRIBUTION MAP

