

Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

SPOTTED KNAPWEED *Centaurea stoebe* L.

Over generations both the rate of introduction and spread of noxious weeds have increased significantly. This change is mainly due to an increase in human travel, expanding commerce through trade, and a lack of knowledge of how weeds are spread. By becoming educated about noxious weeds, you're doing your part to help stop their spread and protect the environment.

What is the threat?

If noxious weeds are left uncontrolled, the Nebraska that we enjoy today will look much different for future generations. Do your part, become educated and help stop the spread of noxious weeds.

How did spotted knapweed get here?

[Spotted knapweed](#) is native to Eurasia, from central Europe east to central Russia, Caucasia, and western Siberia. It was first documented in North America in Victoria, British Columbia in 1893. Spotted Knapweed was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1992.



What does spotted knapweed look like?

Spotted knapweed flower head is shaped like a miniature vase. Its flowers are pink to purple or rarely white. Spotted knapweed bracts are tipped with a black comb-like fringe that gives the flower head a "spotted" appearance.

What is the impact of doing nothing?

Spotted knapweed reduces productivity of grazing lands and wildlife habitat displacing native species and changing plant community structure. Knapweed contains chemicals that are undesirable to livestock and potentially reduce the growth of native vegetation.

Is spotted knapweed good for anything?

Spotted knapweed has little to no value. It is unpalatable to livestock and wildlife. Its presence in hay reduces its value. Some people develop a rash after coming in contact with the foliage.

How does spotted knapweed spread?

Spotted knapweed is a biennial or short-lived perennial and reproduces primarily by seed. Controlling this plant at the rosette stage, or any time before bloom and seed production will prevent its' spread. Seeds are dispersed by wind and can remain viable in the soil for more than 7 years.

How can I control spotted knapweed?

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [spotted knapweed](#) include:

[Mechanical](#) - Small infestations - hand digging or pulling, removing, and disposing the bloom prior to maturity.

[Herbicide](#) - Many herbicides are effective in controlling spotted knapweed.

[Biological](#) - Up to 13 different insects have been introduced from Eurasia to help control spotted knapweed. Livestock will sometimes graze spotted knapweed in its first year of growth at the rosette stage.

What is a Noxious Weed?

A noxious weed is a nonnative plant, which is known to be invasive and can be directly poisonous to man, livestock, and wildlife. Noxious weeds compete with crops, rangeland and pastures reducing yields substantially.

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land in Nebraska to effectively control noxious weeds on his/her property. For more information about Nebraska's Noxious Weeds contact your local [Weed Control Superintendent](#)