

# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## STATE OF NEBRASKA NOXIOUS WEEDS

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.



<b>Common</b>	<b>Scientific</b>	<b>Year declared noxious</b>
Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	1873
Musk thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>	1959
Leafy spurge	<i>Euphorbia esula</i>	1962
Plumeless thistle	<i>Carduus acanthoides</i>	1967
Diffuse knapweed	<i>Centaurea diffusa</i>	1992
Spotted knapweed	<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	1992
*Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria &amp; virgatum</i>	2001
Saltcedar	<i>Tamarix chinensis</i>	2005
Phragmites/Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	2008
*Giant knotweed	<i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	2011
*Japanese knotweed	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	2011
Sericea lespedeza	<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i>	2013

\* Includes any cultivars and hybrids

### 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](#)

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## **CANADA THISTLE** *Cirsium arvense* (L.) Scop.

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### **How did Canada thistle get here?**

[Canada thistle](#) is native to western Eurasia and North Africa and was first introduced in America around 1750. Canada thistle was Nebraska's first plant to be declared a noxious weed in 1873.

### **What does Canada thistle look like?**

Canada thistle is one of 5 nonnative thistle species in Nebraska, so identification is important. There are also 5 native thistles that belong in the State and are beneficial to insects and wildlife. Click on this link to the [Thistles of Nebraska](#) to learn more about Nebraska's thistles.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Canada thistle is unpalatable to livestock and reduces forage production and utilization. It outcompetes desirable vegetation for water, light, and nutrients. If left uncontrolled Canada thistle will completely dominate and leave the land useless. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but Canada thistle will spread to neighboring properties as well. Land managers consider Canada thistle the most difficult thistle to control.

### **Is Canada thistle good for anything?**

Canada thistle seeds are eaten by songbirds, and sometimes furnishes nesting cover for rails and shorebirds.

### **How does Canada thistle spread?**

Canada thistle is a perennial that reproduces from seed and by extensive roots from which arise aerial shoots. Once Canada thistle becomes established, plants can live and reproduce for many years. Canada thistle is dioecious – male and female flowers are produced on different plants so cross pollination is necessary for seed production.

### **How can I control Canada thistle?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [Canada thistle control](#) include:

Mechanical - Cultivation has been used to starve the plant roots by repeatedly destroying new shoots.

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in managing Canada thistle. Repeated applications are necessary.

Biological - The stem weevil (*Ceutorhynchus litura*) has limited success, used alone will NOT control Canada thistle. Canada thistle rust fungus (*Puccinia punctiformis*) has recently been released in Nebraska.



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## **MUSK THISTLE** *Carduus nutans* L.

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### **How did musk thistle get here?**

[Musk thistle](#) is native to western Europe, Siberia, Asia Minor and North Africa. It was first introduced as an ornamental in the United States in 1852 in Pennsylvania. Musk thistle was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1959.



### **What does musk thistle look like?**

Musk thistle is one of 5 nonnative thistle species in Nebraska, so identification is important. There are also 5 native thistles that belong in the State and are beneficial to insects and wildlife. Click on this link to the [Thistles of Nebraska](#) to learn more about Nebraska's thistles. Click on this short [video](#) to learn how to identify musk thistle.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Musk thistle is unpalatable to livestock and reduces forage production and utilization. It outcompetes desirable vegetation for water, light, and nutrients. If left uncontrolled musk thistle will completely dominate and leave the land useless. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but musk thistle will spread to neighboring properties as well.

### **Is musk thistle good for anything?**

Musk thistle seeds are eaten by songbirds, and it is an important butterfly plant.

### **How does musk thistle spread?**

Musk thistle reproduces only by seed, so controlling this plant at the rosette stage, or any time before bloom and seed production will prevent its' spread. Musk thistle is a biennial plant requiring 2 years to complete its life cycle and produce viable seed.

### **How can I control musk thistle?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [musk thistle control](#) include:

Mechanical - Hand digging, removing, and disposing the bloom prior to maturity.

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in controlling musk thistle.

Biological - The musk thistle head weevil (*Rhinocyllus conicus*) has limited success in Nebraska. Biological control agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.

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## LEAFY SPURGE *Euphorbia esula* L.

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### How did leafy spurge get here?

[Leafy spurge](#) is native to Eurasia. The first documented occurrence in North America was in Newbury, Massachusetts in 1827. Leafy spurge was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1962.

### What does leafy spurge look like?

[Leafy spurge](#) is a nonnative invasive weed with bright yellow heart-shaped bracts. A unique characteristic of leafy spurge is the presence of a milky white latex that readily oozes from cut stems, leaves, or roots. Click on this short [video](#) to learn how to identify leafy spurge.

### What is the impact of doing nothing?

Leafy spurge has a white milky juice or latex that contains compounds that are poisonous to cattle and horses, but not sheep and goats. It can reduce pasture and rangeland carrying capacity by as much as 75 percent because it competes with forages and cattle avoid grazing areas infested with this weed. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but leafy spurge will spread to neighboring properties as well.

### Is leafy spurge good for anything?

Leafy spurge is eaten by sheep and goats following an acclimation period with little or no harm.

### How does leafy spurge spread?

Leafy spurge aggressively and quickly spreads in several different ways and is difficult to control. As the seed capsules dry and split, seed can be thrown up to 15 feet. Seeds will float in water and germinate while floating. This increases the spread in sub-irrigated meadows and riparian areas. Leafy spurge is a deep-rooted perennial plant which allows it to spread by roots and vegetative buds. Animals and humans often play a role in seed dispersal.

### How can I control leafy spurge?

Managing small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [leafy spurge control](#) include:

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in managing leafy spurge.

Biological – The flea beetle (*Aphthona lacertosa*) introduced from its native environment in Eurasia may provide some assistance. Biological agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.



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# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **PLUMELESS THISTLE** *Carduus acanthoides* L.

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### **How did plumeless thistle get here?**

[Plumeless thistle](#) is native to western Eurasia. The first record of plumeless thistle growing in North America was at Camden, New Jersey in 1879. Plumeless thistle was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1967.



### **What does plumeless thistle look like?**

Plumeless thistle is one of 5 nonnative thistle species in Nebraska, so identification is important. There are also 5 native thistles that belong in the State and are beneficial to insects and wildlife. Click on this link to the [Thistles of Nebraska](#) to learn more about Nebraska's thistles.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Plumeless thistle is unpalatable to livestock and reduces forage production and utilization. It outcompetes desirable vegetation for water, light, and nutrients. If left uncontrolled plumeless thistle will completely dominate and leave the land useless. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but plumeless thistle will spread to neighboring properties as well.

### **Is plumeless thistle good for anything?**

Plumeless thistle seeds are eaten by songbirds, and it is an important butterfly plant.

### **How does plumeless thistle spread?**

Plumeless thistle reproduces only by seed, so controlling this plant at the rosette stage, or any time before bloom and seed production will prevent its' spread. Plumeless thistle is a biennial plant requiring 2 years to complete its life cycle and produce viable seed. The seeds can remain viable in the soil for more than 10 years.

### **How can I control plumeless thistle?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [plumeless thistle control](#) include:

Mechanical - Hand digging, removing, and disposing the bloom prior to maturity.

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in controlling plumeless thistle.

Biological – The plumeless thistle head weevil ([Rhinocyllus conicus](#)) has limited success in Nebraska. Biological control agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.

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# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **DIFFUSE KNAPWEED** *Centaurea diffusa* Lam.

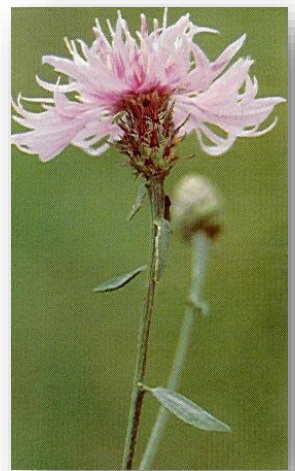
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### **How did diffuse knapweed get here?**

[Diffuse knapweed](#) is native to the eastern Mediterranean region to western Asia, and the former Republic of the Soviet Union to western Germany. It was first documented in Washington in 1907. Diffuse knapweed was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1992.



### **What does diffuse knapweed look like?**

Diffuse knapweed flower head is shaped like a miniature vase. Its flowers are usually white but sometimes rose or purple. Diffuse knapweed bracts are buff or brown at the tips, but not usually black, and tipped with a distinctive 1/16 to 5/16-inch long terminal spine.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Diffuse 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 diffuse knapweed good for anything?**

Diffuse knapweed has little to no value. It is unpalatable to livestock and wildlife. It contains allelopathic chemicals that suppress and may exclude desirable forage and other species. Some people develop a rash after handling the plants.

### **How does diffuse knapweed spread?**

Diffuse 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 diffuse knapweed?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [diffuse knapweed](#) control include:

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

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

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

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## **SPOTTED KNAPWEED** *Centaurea stoebe* L.

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### **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.

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# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE** *Lythrum salicaria* L., including any cultivars and hybrids

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### **What is the threat?**

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### **How did purple loosestrife get here?**

[Purple loosestrife](#) is native to Eurasia. It is believed to have been introduced to the northeastern United States by European settlers in the early 1800s. Purple loosestrife was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2001.

### **What does purple loosestrife look like?**

Purple loosestrife flowers have 6 rose-purple to magenta petals along a terminal spike. It has a 4-angled stem and leaves opposite. It is sometimes mistaken with other purple flowered plants including American germander and various vervain species. Click on this short [video](#) to learn how to identify purple loosestrife.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Purple loosestrife can have a major negative impact on native wetland habitats, resulting in reduced productivity of native plants and loss of biodiversity. Once loosestrife invades wetlands the natural habitat is out of balance and the productivity of native plant and animal communities is severely reduced. Loosestrife clogs waterways, reducing the amount of water available for irrigating crops. Recreational activities are affected reducing tourism revenues.

### **Is purple loosestrife good for anything?**

Purple loosestrife is an escaped ornamental. It is an excellent honey plant used by bees.

### **How does purple loosestrife spread?**

Purple loosestrife is a prolific seed producer and has a perennial root system (rhizome). In one season each plant can produce up to two million seeds, each of which can remain viable for many years. Seeds are spread by water, wind, birds, animals, and people.

### **How can I control purple loosestrife?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [purple loosestrife](#) control include:

Mechanical - Pulling and digging plants can be effective for small areas.

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in managing purple loosestrife.

[Biological](#) - Several insects have been introduced from Europe, including the root weevil, two beetles and flower feeding weevils. Biological agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.

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# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **SALT CEDAR** *Tamarix chinensis* Lour.

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### **How did saltcedar get here?**

[Saltcedar](#) is native to Asia. It is thought to have been brought from southeastern Europe and eastern Asia into the United States in the mid-1800s. Saltcedar was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2005.

### **What does saltcedar look like?**

Saltcedar is a shrub or small tree with distinctive small pinkish to white flowers which appear from late June through August. It can reach 25 feet in height with numerous, reddish-brown branches. Saltcedar has alternate pale green leaves that turn yellow in the fall and drop to the soil surface during the winter.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Saltcedar has little forage value for livestock or wildlife. It can increase the salinity of the soil which reduces the productivity of native plants and results in the loss of natural habitat. Saltcedar can utilize soil water to such an extent that it may dry up streams and reduce water levels of rivers and lakes.

### **Is saltcedar good for anything?**

Saltcedar provides nectar and pollen for bees and nesting cover for mourning doves.

### **How does saltcedar spread?**

Saltcedar reproduces by seed and by spreading root sprouts or stem fragments. Saltcedar is a perennial plant that is dispersed by wind and water. Once seeds take up water, they can germinate in one day.

### **How can I control saltcedar?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [saltcedar](#) control include:

**Mechanical** - Very difficult due to its ability to resprout from roots. Seedlings may be hand pulled.

**Herbicide** - Several herbicides are effective in managing saltcedar. Treatments should be late season.

**Biological** - Several leaf beetles have been approved for release in the United States. Though this control method is slow, it is inexpensive, largely self-sustaining and targets only saltcedar species, leaving other plants unharmed. Biological agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.

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## **PHRAGMITES / COMMON REED** *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. Ex Steud.

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### **How did nonnative phragmites get here?**

[Nonnative phragmites](#) is native to Europe. It was first introduced in North America in the late 1800s. Nonnative phragmites was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2008. [Click for an interactive 360-degree video on phragmites.](#)



### **What does nonnative phragmites look like?**

It is important to be able to distinguish [native from nonnative phragmites](#). There are several characteristics that can be used to correctly identify each species. Stem texture and color, leaf sheaths adhered to the culms or not, plant color, presence of small black dots and stem density should all be considered.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Nonnative phragmites negatively impacts the native riparian and wetland habitats, resulting in reduced productivity of native plants and loss of biodiversity. Loss of native habitat and wildlife effects the social and economic well-being of local communities. The thick biomass will increase the risk of flooding along waterways. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but nonnative phragmites will spread to neighboring properties as well.

### **Is nonnative phragmites good for anything?**

Nonnative phragmites is readily eaten by cattle and horses when it is immature.

### **How does nonnative phragmites spread?**

The predominant means of [spreading nonnative phragmites](#) is through rhizomes and stolons along with seed dispersal. Wind, water, birds, animals, machinery, and humans all contribute to the rapid spread of phragmites.

### **How can I control nonnative phragmites?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [nonnative phragmites](#) control include:

**Mechanical** – Includes disking, mowing, burning, draining, flooding, grazing, and digging. Mechanical methods used alone are unlikely to kill the plants.

**Herbicide** – Approved aquatic herbicides are effective in managing nonnative phragmites.

**Biological** – 26 species of herbivores are known to feed on phragmites. Only a few feed strictly on the nonnative variety of phragmites, including the rhizome-feeding noctuid moth.

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## **GIANT KNOTWEED** *Fallopia sachalinensis*, including all cultivars and hybrids

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### **How did giant knotweed get here?**

[Giant knotweed](#) is native to Asia. It was first introduced as an ornamental in the United States in the late 1800s. Giant knotweed (including all cultivars and hybrids) was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2011.

### **What does giant knotweed look like?**

Giant knotweed is the biggest of the invasive knotweeds. **Stems** reaching 6 – 16 feet tall, hollow, jointed, and swollen at the nodes. **Leaves** are very large and heart shaped. They are often more than a foot long and 2/3 as wide. The **flowers** are white with a greenish tint and form in small clusters and mainly on the upper portions of the stems. Giant knotweed hybridizes with Japanese knotweed to form the [Bohemian knotweed](#) species.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Due to the lack of natural predators, and their ability to spread by root and stem fragments, giant knotweed species have spread and become widely established throughout North America and Europe. Giant knotweed rapidly colonizes to clog small waterways and displace streamside vegetation, increasing bank erosion and lowering the quality of riparian habitat for fish and wildlife.

### **Is giant knotweed good for anything?**

Giant knotweed has limited value to livestock and white-tailed deer.

### **How does giant knotweed spread?**

Giant knotweed reproduces vegetatively via extensive roots and rhizomes, and stem fragments. It can be moved by waterways, floods, or contaminated soil. Giant knotweed is a prolific seed-producer.

### **How can I control giant knotweed?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [giant knotweed control](#) include:

- Mechanical - Hand digging, cutting, or covering. Mechanical methods alone are not likely to kill the plant.
- Herbicide - Spraying and stem injection of herbicides are effective methods of managing giant knotweed.
- Biological - There are currently no approved biological control agents for managing giant knotweed in the United States. Research continues to find host specific biocontrol agents.

### **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](#)*

# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **JAPANESE KNOTWEED** *Fallopia japonica*, including all cultivars and hybrids

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 Japanese knotweed get here?**

[Japanese knotweed](#) is native to Asia. It was first introduced as an ornamental in the United States in the late 1800s. Japanese knotweed (including all cultivars and hybrids) was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2011.

### **What does [Japanese knotweed](#) look like?**

**Stems** are stout, cane-like, and reddish-brown. The plants die back at the end of the growing season, but their old reddish-brown canes often persist. **Leaves** are about 6 in. long by 3-4 in. wide, broadly oval to somewhat triangular with a truncated (square) base and a tapered tip. The branched clusters of **flowers** are small, creamy white to greenish white. Japanese knotweed hybridizes with giant knotweed to form the [Bohemian knotweed](#) species.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Due to the lack of natural predators, and their ability to spread by root and stem fragments, Japanese knotweed species have spread and become widely established throughout North America and Europe. Japanese knotweed rapidly colonizes to clog small waterways and displace streamside vegetation, increasing bank erosion and lowering the quality of riparian habitat for fish and wildlife.

### **Is Japanese knotweed good for anything?**

Japanese knotweed has limited value to livestock and white-tailed deer.

### **How does Japanese knotweed spread?**

Japanese knotweed reproduces mainly vegetatively via extensive roots and rhizomes, and stem fragments. It can be moved by waterways, floods, or contaminated soil. Japanese knotweed can also germinate from seed, although this is less common.

### **How can I control Japanese knotweed?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [Japanese knotweed control](#) include:

Mechanical - Hand digging, cutting, or covering. Mechanical methods alone are not likely to kill the plant.

Herbicide - Spraying and stem injection of herbicides are effective methods of managing Japanese knotweed.

Biological - There are currently no approved biological control agents for managing Japanese knotweed in the United States. Research continues to find host specific biocontrol agents.

### **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.*

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# Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

## **SERICA LESPEDEZA** *Lespedeza cuneata* (Dum. Cours.) G. Don

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 sericea lespedeza get here?**

[Sericea lespedeza](#) is native to Asia. It was first introduced into the United States in 1896, and the oldest listing of it on Nebraska record is 1974 in Richardson County. Sericea lespedeza was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2013.



### **What does sericea lespedeza look like?**

Sericea lespedeza grows 3 to 6 feet in height. Leaves are alternate and are composed of numerous 3-leaflet clusters. The white or cream flowers are composed of 1 to 3 pea-like flowers and appear from July to September.

### **What is the impact of doing nothing?**

Sericea lespedeza out-competes native grasses thus reducing the carrying capacity of livestock because it is not palatable to most livestock. In a mixture with grass, it usually becomes the dominant species after three to four years. Established sericea lespedeza plants will reduce or eliminate competing vegetation and restrict the amount of light reaching other plants. A scientific Weed Risk Assessment indicated a very high risk to invade 98% of land in Nebraska.

### **Is sericea lespedeza good for anything?**

Sericea lespedeza forage quality is low. Foliage is eaten by deer, rabbit, and wild turkeys. Seeds are eaten by quail and other birds.

### **How does sericea lespedeza spread?**

Sericea lespedeza is a long-lived perennial forb spreading by its rhizome roots. It also produces an abundant amount of seed that may be spread by wildlife and livestock.

### **How can I control sericea lespedeza?**

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [sericea lespedeza](#) control include:

Mechanical - Mowing and burning will prevent seed production but will not control the plant.

[Herbicide](#) - Several herbicides are effective in controlling sericea lespedeza. Using herbicides following a prescribed fire once regrowth has occurred is effective.

Biological - Because sericea lespedeza is still grown as a crop in southern States, no biocontrol has been approved by USDA at this time.

### **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](#)*