

Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

DIFFUSE KNAPWEED *Centaurea diffusa* Lam.

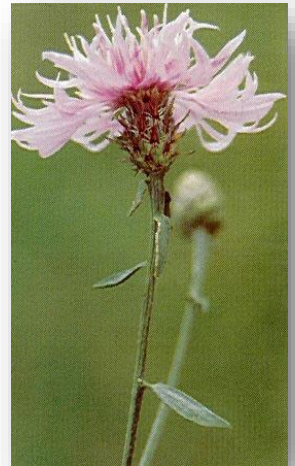
Over generations both the rate of introduction and spread of noxious weeds have increased significantly. This change is mainly due to an increase in human travel, expanding commerce through trade, and a lack of knowledge of how weeds are spread. By becoming educated about noxious weeds, you're doing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

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](#)