

# Meadow Knapweed and spotted knapweed

## Meadow Knapweed (*Centaurea pratensis*)

### Description

Meadow Knapweed is a hybrid species of black and brown knapweed from Europe. It was introduced in the Northwest for livestock forage and is now well established in Western Oregon, where it is considered invasive and is increasing throughout NE and Central Oregon. Of the 2 knapweeds, it is the most prominent in the Willamette Valley. It is a member of the Asteraceae (daisy) family.

### Identification

The flower heads are pink to reddish purple and almost globe shaped. It flowers in midsummer to fall from robust root crowns. Plants usually reach 1 ft. The lower leaves have long stalks while the upper leaves have no stalk. Stems have many branches and are tipped by a solitary flower head up to 1 inch wide. A key identifying feature is the brown bushy fringed bracts on the flower head. Meadow knapweed has a tough long perennial root system. It favors roadsides, gravel or sand bars, riverbanks, irrigated pastures, moist meadows and forest openings

### Impact

Seeds are dispersed by rodents, wind, water, and people. Meadow knapweed out competes grasses and other native pasture species. It also displaces native pollination species and reduces biodiversity. It invades native prairies, oak savannah, even clear-cuts.

### Manual Control

For a few weeds manual control can work, but if it is a large infestation, the long tough perennial root system makes it tough. If using manual control, do so before it has seeds and dispose of in your garbage and not recycle bin. See Biological control.

### Biological control

In Oregon, seed-head fly, seed-head moth, and tow seed-head weevil are used. This plant is also being tested as a host for other knapweed biocontrol agents. Using biological control almost 100% of the seeds are destroyed.

Report Spotted or Meadow Knapweed to the Oregon Invasive Species Hotline: 1-866-468-2337 (1-866-INVADER)





## Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*)

### Description

A European import introduced into North America in contaminated seed, on livestock and even ship ballast. The plant now dominates millions of acres of prime grasslands and forestland in the western United States. It is a major economic issue for agriculture. In Oregon it occurs in 30 of the 32 counties but is most prominent in Central Oregon, Hood River County, and Wallowa County.

### Identification

Spotter Knapweed is a short-lived perennial growing up to 4 feet tall. It blooms in midsummer to fall. It is multi-stemmed and topped with purple or sometimes cream-colored flowers. The tips of the flower heads bracts are usually black, thus called Spotted Knapweed. Seeds are dispersed by wind, animals, and people. Spotted Knapweed is well documented to extrude allelopathic compounds into the soil to restrict growth of other plants. Thus it restricts native plants diversity.

### Impact

Spotted knapweed is one of the most dominant weed species in the western United States. Millions of acres of prime range and native habitat are infested. Oregon infestations are broadly scattered, though increasing, causing economic losses to right of way maintenance, grazing and range productivity. The species forms dense stands.

### Control

See Information in Meadow Knapweed information

