



# Wallowa County Weed Watch

## Spotted Knapweed

*Spotted Knapweed is an aggressive noxious weed!! A native of Eurasia, it was introduced as a contaminant in alfalfa seed and is now invading Wallowa County.*

### The Problem

Spotted Knapweed is extremely aggressive and hard to control. It can bolt and produce flowers in its first year, live up to nine years, and produce up to 40,000 seeds yearly. Seeds remain viable in the soil for at least seven years. The roots produce a toxin that kills other plants severely reducing forage for wildlife (i.e. elk) and livestock. It also allows more erosion than native grasses and limits water absorption into the soil. Biological control agents are not proving effective for Spotted Knapweed.

Spotted Knapweed is spreading fast in Wallowa County. Currently it can be found near Joseph, Wallowa Lake, Lostine, and in small patches countywide. It is a top priority weed in Wallowa County and Oregon, and requires aggressive treatment measures.

### Identification

Spotted Knapweed can be hard to tell from the more common Diffuse Knapweed, especially in the rosette stage. Both have deeply notched or lobed leaves (top picture). Spotted Knapweed is perennial growing from the same deep taproot for multiple years and may have last year's dead stems still attached at the base of the plant. The plant can have many growing stems and reach four feet tall. Stems usually branch in the top half of the plant (over a foot off the ground) giving the plant a taller "airier" look than *Diffuse Knapweed*, which usually has a shorter, bushier look.

Spotted Knapweed flowers are purple, pink or white (Middle pictures). The bud is rounded, with finely fringed, usually dark scales (giving the bud a spotted look). *Diffuse Knapweed* buds are smaller, less round and always have a spine on the end of the scale that gives the plant a very prickly feel.

### Treatment

Small patches of Spotted Knapweed can be eradicated by repeated hand pulling, but care should be taken to remove as much of the root as possible. Aminopyralid (Milestone), Picloram (Tordon) and Clopyralid (Curtail, Transline) seem to provide the best long-term results. Dicamba (Banvel) and 2-4d treatments work well short-term between bolt and bud stage, but must be repeated annually.

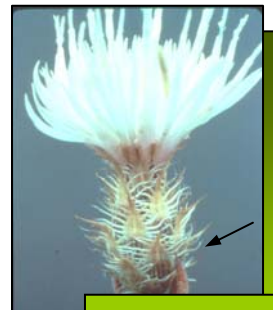
Carefully timed grazing can control knapweed and mowing can help control seed production. Establishing healthy plant communities-with both broadleaves and grasses- is essential to long-term success.



**Rosette**



**Spotted:  
Fringed scales**



**Diffuse:  
Spiny scales**



**Mature Plant**

**Read and follow all label instructions when applying herbicides.** Trade names have been used to simplify instructions and no endorsement or warranty is expressed or implied by the Wallowa County Weed Board or this brochure.

### **For more information or to report weed sites call:**

Allen Schnetzky, Wallowa County Weed Control (541) 426-3332  
Leigh Dawson, Wallowa Whitman National Forest (541) 426-5535

Mark Porter, Wallowa Resources (541) 426-8053  
Nelle Murray, Asotin County (509) 243-2098