RUSSIAN KNAPWEED

Centaurea repens

CONTROL

Hand Pulling

Hand pulling is not an effective tool for the management to Russian knapweed as it will rapidly re-sprout from rhizomes.

Mowing

While Russian knapweed does spread by seed, it mostly spreads by rhizomes through the soil. Mowing will reduce biomass, but it is not an effective method of control for this species.

Biological control

N/A

Grazing

Grazing is not an effective tool for the management of Russian knapweed due to its deep, rhizomatous root system and can actually cause a neurological disorder called "chewing disease" in horses.

Herbicide

There are a number of herbicides that provide effective control of Russian knapweed. The herbicide chart on the back lists approved controls for Russian knapweed. Always consult product labels and read them carefully to ensure correct species/land management usage and chemical application.

Ideal Timing for Treatment Options		
Spring	Summer	Fall
Hand pull most of the taproot with plant, and bag flower heads if present when pulled.		
Grazing		Grazing
	Biological Control	
Foliar Spray		Foliar Spray



Russian Knapweed Life Cycle

Life Cycle	Root	Leaves	Stems	Flower	Seed/Fruit	Toxic
Perennial	Rhizomes with black, bark-like covering	Basal leaves toothed, covered with fine hairs, grayish-green. Lower stem leaves deeply lobed, 2 to 4 inches long. Upper stem leaves narrow, toothed, and up to 2½ inches long.	One or more stems up to 3 feet tall.	One purple flower head per branch tip. Bracts rounded with papery edge.	Oval, gray or ivory with long white bristles.	Horses

Herbicides for Russian Knapweed, Centaurea repens

Active Ingredient	Rate	Efficacy	Comments
Picloram	2-4 pint/ acre	Spring at bud to mid-flowering growth stages; or late in fall	Use higher rates for older or dense stands; late treatments in fall to dormant plants very effective. Cannot use near surface water, shallow ground water, landscaped areas or current/future vegetable gardens
Aminopyralid	5-7 fl oz/ acre	Spring and summer at bud to flowering growth stages; or late in fall	Use higher rate for older stands; late treatments in fall to dormant plants very effective; Milestone may be used to edge of ponds or streams. Do not apply to landscaped areas or current/future vegetable gardens
Clopyralid	1 pint/ acre	Spring after all shoot have emerged, bud to mid-flower growth stages; late in or fall	Late treatments in fall to dormant plants are very effective
Chlorosulfuron/ Aminocyclopyrachlor	5.5 oz/ acre	Spring after shoots have emerged through the fall	Late fall treatments into winter when conditions are suitable for spraying is very effective
Chlorsulfuron	1 oz	Spring bud to flowering growth state; or late in fall	Late treatments in fall to dormant plants are very effective; temporary injury to cool season grasses may occur from fall treatments
Aminopylarid + 2-4,D	2-2.5 oz/ acre	Effective if used from bolt to bud or in the fall	Can be applied to water's edge. Do not apply in landscaped areas or in current/future vegetable gardens

Information on diagnostic identifying characteristics adapted from "Montana's Noxious Weeds" by Pokorny and Mangold, Montana State University Extension Bulletin EB0159.

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