

Invasive Species Fact Sheet-Diffused Knapweed

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Species Common Name: Diffused Knapweed

Species Scientific Name: *Centaurea diffusa*

Native Range and Introduction: This species is native to the Mediterranean region of Europe and Asia. It was first introduced into the United State as contaminated seed in the 1800s. This species is spread locally by wind and water, with longer pathways being vehicles, equipment, and contaminated hay and seed.

Description: Diffused Knapweed is a perennial, reaching heights around three feet. This species can reproduce from either seeds or rhizomes. This plant begins growth as a basal rosette. Basal leaves are long with deeply lobbed margins, while upper leaves are short and very small with entire margins. Flowers appear on branch tips and are usually white. The bracts on the underside of the flowering head, are sharp and light in color with a defined point. It is a prolific seed producer and tends to break off as its base and drop seed as it blows in the wind like a tumbleweed.

Ecological and Economical Threats: Ecologically the species is extremely aggressive and quickly pushing out native and other more desired vegetation, leading to a drop-in species richness and biodiversity. Economical the species can lead to lower carry capacity in range and pasture situations along with lower yields in hay and row crops.

Regulated Status in Wyoming: Diffused Knapweed is on the State Designated Noxious Species List and is also on the North American Invasive Species Management Association Weed Free Forage Noxious Species List which Wyoming uses for weed free forage standards.

Distribution in Wyoming: This species is found in all but three counties in Wyoming. Those counties being Crook, Sheridan, and Hot Springs.

Control Options:

Mechanical: As a perennial species, mechanical techniques (pulling, hoeing, or chopping) could help reduce seed production, but will not likely lead to overall control of the current infestation.

Chemical: Depending on your situation there are a few herbicides that work well on this species, Milestone (Aminopyralid) and Tordon 22K (Picloram) in range or Perspective (Aminocyclopyrachlor+ Chlorsulfuron) would be a good option for ROW or industrial sites.

Biological: Two options here: Goats could be grazed, which should reduce seed production and plant vigor. Also, two species of insect, Blunt Knapweed Flower Weevil and Lesser Flowerhead Weevil, are available for release on this species, both have shown excellent results on this knapweed.

Integrated Weed Management: This could be an early season grazing treatment with goats followed by a late summer/early fall treatment with an herbicide, a combination like this would likely lead to the best control results.

Online Sources:

URL: <http://www.invasiveplantatlas.org/subject.html?sub=4472>

URL: <https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/diffknapweed.shtml>

URL: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/weeds/w1411-14.pdf>

Image 1 URL: <https://www.invasive.org/browse/detail.cfm?imgnum=1148105>

Image 2 URL: <https://www.invasive.org/browse/detail.cfm?imgnum=5366154>



Image 1-Flowers and Bracts



Image 2-Plant in Bolting Stage

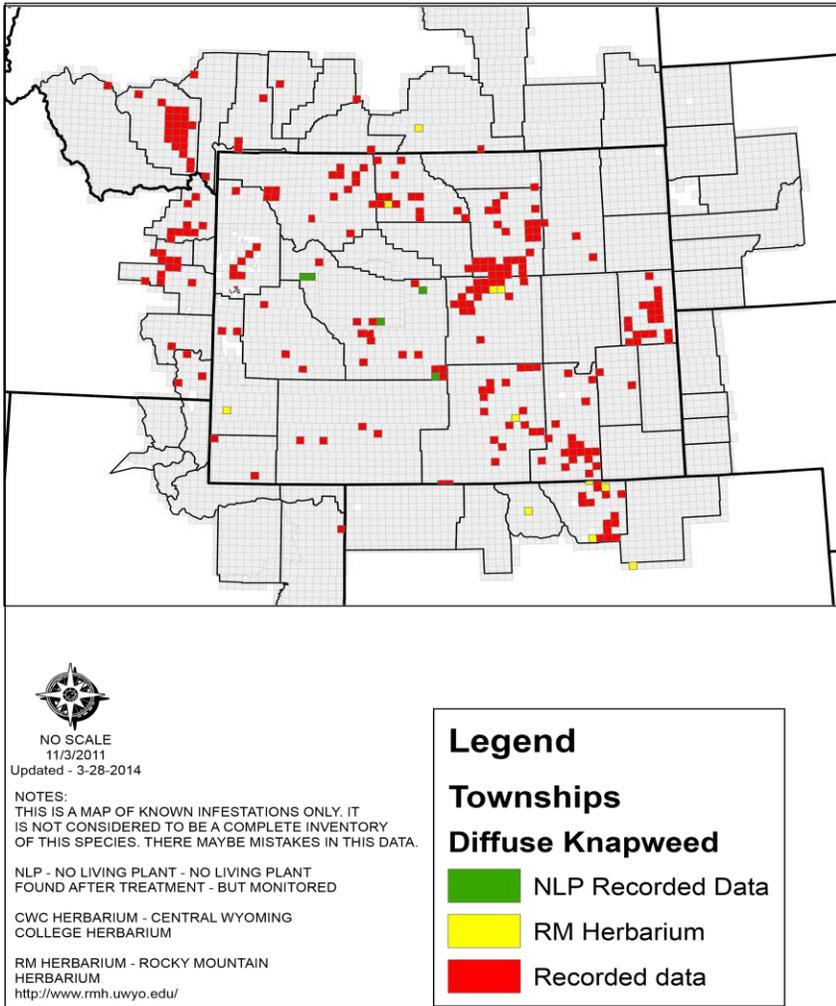


Figure 1-Diffused Knapweed Distribution in Wyoming and Surrounding States

URL: http://wyoweed.org/images/Weed_Maps/Diffuse_Knapweed.pdf