

Plant: Diffuse Knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*)

Identification: Diffuse knapweed can be an annual, biennial, or short lived perennial. Growing up to 3 feet tall from a sturdy taproot, its single stem gives a bushy appearance. It has white, pink, and sometimes purple flowers, with greenish brown bracts below on the flower head that usually grow perpendicular to the flower head. This plant reproduces primarily by seed. The seeds have small tufts and usually don't travel too far from the parent plant, although after the plant dries, it can break off and act as a tumble weed dispersing the rest of the seed across long distances. Diffuse knapweed usually blooms mid-summer through fall. It is typically found in rangeland, pastures, sand and gravel habitats, and disturbed areas.

Defense: Mechanical control can be used on small infestations by digging up and removing the root crown. Be sure to bag or burn the seed heads. Mowing will not control knapweed. Mowing can be used if the infestation is found later in the year to keep the plants from flowering until an approved control method can be used. Do not mow plants that have gone to seed. Selective broadleaf herbicides such as clopyralid (Stinger) and aminopyralid (Milestone) are the most effective herbicides for diffuse knapweed control, having soil residual activity that provides extended control of germination.

Always read and understand the pesticide label and restrictions on any pesticide you are using. The label is the law.

