

**Plant:** Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*) aka Hoary cress

**Identification:** One of the first noxious weeds to appear in the spring, Whitetop is a deep-rooted perennial that may grow up to two feet tall. Leaves are blue-green, arrowhead shaped and covered with soft white hairs. The base of each leaf clasps around the stem at the point of attachment. Plants have many small, white, four-petaled flowers, giving the plants a white, flat-topped appearance. Whitetop grows well in open, unshaded areas across a variety of soil types. Pastures, rangeland, ditch banks, roadsides, croplands, and wastelands are great habitat for Whitetop. It reproduces from root segments and seeds, and is commonly spread by seed in contaminated hay or by dragging the root segments during farming practices. Once established, it can form dense stands.

**Defense:** Management of this weed requires diligent work. Because it spreads through the roots so easily, mechanical control is usually not viable unless you pull the plant when it is extremely young and get all of the plant and root out of the ground, usually within a couple weeks of surfacing. Herbicide such as Escort XP has been particularly effective in controlling this plant. Replanting desirable vegetation after removal will help compete against Whitetop. Quick response after finding Whitetop and not letting it become established is always the best way to prevent it.

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

