



RUSSIAN THISTLE (*Salsola iberica*)

Family: Chenopodiaceae (Goosefoot) Life Cycle: Annual

Class: Weed of Concern - Control Recommended AKA: Tumbleweed, Prickly Russian thistle

RUSSIAN THISTLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dead plants can create fire hazards where they gather against buildings and fences • Some populations have developed herbicide resistance in the northwest • Tumbling dead plants can spread seeds across miles of terrain • Native to Eurasia

CONTROL METHODS
<p>Mechanical: Hand pulling or digging can be effective on small infestations. Mowing just before flowers bloom can provide control. Do not mow if seeds have already set. Tilling will control emerged plants but must be repeated as new plants germinate from the soil seed bank.</p> <p>Cultural: Not strongly competitive in established plant communities. Support diverse desirable vegetation through appropriate grazing rotation, reseeding disturbed areas, etc. Does not tolerate regular irrigation or shading.</p> <p>Livestock will eat young plants, but it should not be their only forage.</p> <p>Biological: There are currently no biological agents approved for release in Washington State.</p> <p>Chemical*: Most effective when plants are small and rapidly growing. Recommendations below.</p>

DESCRIPTION
<p>Growth Traits: Summer annual that grows into a prickly, bushy, rounded plant in one growing season. May grow three feet tall a few feet in diameter. Flowers inconspicuous. Plants may appear bluish-green.</p> <p>Leaves and Stems: Leaves are small, stiff and tipped with a spine. Stems are ridged, upward-curving and branching. Stems may be green, red or striped. Stems become woody as the plant matures.</p> <p>Flowers: Blooms July - September. Flower structures can be highly variable in appearance. Flowers solitary, growing in leaf axils. Flower's sepals may be brown to pink or deep red.</p> <p>Roots and Reproduction: Deep taproot and spreading lateral roots capable of extracting moisture from deep in soil. Reproduces only by seed. Seeds may remain viable for three years, but most germinate in the next growing season. Plants break away from root and tumble across the landscape spreading seeds across large areas. Plants may produce thousands to over 200,000 seeds, depending on the plant size.</p> <p>Habitat: Most prolific in arid and semi-arid ecosystems, and is adapted to alkaline and saline soils. Grows best where there are loose soils. Grows abundantly in disturbed areas such as roadsides, fallowed fields, vacant lots and waste areas.</p> <p>Toxicity: It is possible for plants to accumulate high levels of oxalates which can be toxic to livestock, especially sheep.</p>

***ALWAYS read herbicide labels and follow instructions for use and PPE.** The use of a surfactant (aka sticker) increases the efficacy of herbicide application, saving you time and money. If treating over multiple seasons, rotate using herbicides with different modes of action to reduce likelihood of herbicide resistance developing. Below are recommended herbicides based on stage of growth and time of year. All recommendations are supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Noxious Weed Board is implied. Trade names are used to simplify recommendations.

NOTE: There is no 'magic bullet' in noxious weed control, and control efforts must be repeated every season to stop their spread. Using a combination of methods (e.g. cultural and chemical) will lead to better control over time.

April - May Rosette, Seedling Stage	June - July Bolting, Bud, Bloom Stage	August - October Seeding, Fall Regrowth Stage
2,4-D	Tordon + 2,4-D	Tordon + 2,4-D
Prescott	Roundup (spot spray)	Roundup (spot spray)
Curtail		
Milestone		