

Spotted Knapweed

Centaurea biebersteinii DC. = *Centaurea maculosa* Lam.

Identification:

A perennial, this plant sends several branched upright stems from a “lacy” rosette with a central taproot. Usually 2-4’ tall. Flowers are usually pinkish-purple, but sometimes cream colored. This plant flowers from late spring through fall depending on moisture and temperature. Flower heads have black-topped “bracts” which give the flower heads a “spotted” appearance. Easily confused with diffuse knapweed. Common on roadsides, pastures, forest openings and grasslands.

Potential Damage:

Aggressively out competes native plants and may even have chemical substances which inhibit the growth and development of surrounding vegetation. Will establish in any disturbed soil and spread. Vegetative communities can be altered due to this plant. Some sites in western Montana have recorded a 90% reduction in elk forage availability, resulting in loss of elk and deer herd use in many areas.

Control and Prevention:

Take care not to drive or walk through infested areas. Stop and inspect vehicle between patrol units. MARK infested site with bright pink or orange flagging. MARK SITE on map and provide to Refuge Operations Specialist **immediately** upon return from field. Spotted knapweed is a Class B noxious weed in Washington state and land owners/managers are legally required to prevent the spread of this plant.

Current Status on the Hanford Reach National Monument:

Spotted knapweed has not been recorded on the Monument to date. Spotted knapweed has been recorded in Washington state. IT IS VERY **IMPORTANT** to record and remove this plant AS SOON AS possible after it is sighted. Please be aware and look for this plant everywhere on the monument. The goal with this plant is to keep it from occupying any areas of the Monument. Eradication of any infestation will be accomplished by Refuge Operations staff.

