

Babysbreath



Babysbreath, friend or foe?

An ornamental flower that is a vital component in any prom corsage or wedding flower arrangement; or a stinky, flammable and unwanted weed; the opinion on *Gypsophila paniculata*, commonly known as babysbreath (for reasons that still escape this author), varies widely and the truth is probably somewhere in the middle. However, here in Okanogan County babysbreath has the potential to spread rapidly if left unattended and has done so up and down the valley. If you are harvesting your babysbreath, great! Just please make sure that you harvest all of it and do not allow it to spread to your neighbor's fields.

If you are fighting Babysbreath remember that Babysbreath is a perennial and has a deep woody root system. You must be persistent and treat new seedlings early to properly fight the infestation.

**THE OKANOGAN COUNTY
NOXIOUS WEED BOARD
PROVIDES FREE ON-SITE
CONSULTATIONS.**

Placement of Class B & C noxious weeds on the state noxious weed list allows counties to enforce control if locally desired, if the species has already become widespread, or established.

Board meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 4:00 PM in the

Commissioners' Hearing Room. You are always invited to attend and your comments and suggestions are always welcome. Recertification credit is available.

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Class B & C Noxious Weeds of Okanogan County



Canada Thistle

The weeds that follow within this publication are weeds that are not generally labeled as required to be controlled. These weeds however, can still spread easily, aggressively and rapidly if they are given the opportunity.

Puncturevine



Puncture vine, a.k.a. Goathead The weed that NOBODY likes.

If you ever stepped on the horned seed pod of Puncturevine, also known as Goathead, you know exactly what I'm talking about. The plant itself isn't anything spectacular, just a low-growing and inconspicuous plant with a simple, little flower. Oh, but that's all part of its evil master plan; you see it is so simple and easy to miss that you don't know you are walking and/or driving through the stuff and all the while its horned seeds are sticking to your tires and the bottom of your shoes. From there they will spread to new sites and continue their invasion or they will fall out of the bottom of your shoes to hide in the carpet, just waiting to be stepped on by someone's bare feet... **OUCH!** We humans have our thumbtacks, nature has her goatheads.

Treatment of this weed, fortunately, is relatively easy. It does not have a deep root system and can be pulled easily. The problem goes back to its devilish little seeds. The hard little seeds can stay viable in the ground long after the plant has been pulled. Try to get as many seeds out of the ground as possible and always try to pull goathead before it has the chance to form any seeds, to stop its spread.

Sulfur Cinquefoil



Quick Facts

- Spreads by seeds mainly but can spread by roots if moved by tilling or soil-moving equipment.
- Mowing is not an effective means of control.
- There are no biological controls available.

Common Saint Johnswort



Quick Facts

- Contains a chemical agent that can increase photosensitivity in light skinned animals. This can lead to severe dermatitis.
- Noticeable in the fall as it turns a deep dusty-red color.

Longspine Sandbur



Quick Facts

- Longspine Sandbur is a Summer Annual that reproduces by seeds contained within its spiny burs.
- Longspine Sandbur competes poorly with dense vegetation. Pastures and fields that have been managed well are usually not invaded.
- Chemical control is effective as well as mowing before seed production can begin though large plants may produce by root nodes.

Canada Thistle



Quick Facts

- Canada Thistle is a creeping perennial that spreads from both root system and seed.
- Control is difficult because of its extensive root system, and should be done at the bud stage for best results.
- Persistence is imperative. Many treatments may be necessary to exhaust the energy stores of the extensive root system.

Hoary Cress (Whitetop)



Quick Facts

- Hoary Cress is a perennial that spreads by both seed and root systems.
- Extensive cultivation for three years will eradicate a patch of whitetop if no green is allowed to show.

Myrtle Spurge



Quick Facts

- A perennial spurge that creeps along the ground outward from a single taproot.
- Leaves, stems and roots all exude a milky sap that is irritating to eyes and skin.
- This is an ornamental that is escaping Okanogan County gardens.

Perennial Pepperweed



Quick Facts

- A tough weed to control, very small sections of the plant left behind can cause more plants to sprout, making mechanical control difficult. Chemical control works but care must be taken if the infestation is near a water source.

Common Mullein



Quick Facts

- Not listed as a noxious weed by the State Weed Board.
- More often than not it will come and then leave, but does have the ability to become invasive, especially in disturbed soils.
- A single plant can put out 200,000 seeds that stay viable in the soil for almost 100 years!