

ALERT - INVASIVE SPECIES

Field Scabious - *Knautia arvensis*



Be on the lookout!

Report using the *Report Invasives BC* Smart Phone App
or call the Northwest Invasive Plant Council

Toll Free: 1-866-449-3337

ABOUT

ORIGIN: Field scabious was introduced from Europe as an ornamental plant. It favours grassy areas and grows up to 1.3 m tall with a deep tap root. The flowers are very similar to those of non-invasive ornamental plant *Scabiosa* (aka butterfly plant, or pincushion flower).

DESCRIPTION: A perennial with a deep taproot. The stems are erect, hairy, sparsely branched, and can grow up to 1.3 m tall. There can be one or several stems per plant, with little or no branching on the upper stem. The basal leaves tend to be lance-shaped, have pointed tips, and the margins can be smooth or coarsely toothed. Stem leaves are opposite, deeply lobed and attached directly to the stem. Flower head is violet/blue to purple with a ring of narrow green bracts immediately below it.

HABITAT: It prefers loose, loam soils that are nutrient rich and moderately moist to dry and is often found along roadsides, in pastures and meadows.

IMPACTS: This rapidly spreading weed is very competitive with forage stands and native pastures. Infestations result in significant declines in hay production and pasture carrying capacity.

REPRODUCTION: Reproduces by seed. A single plant can produce up to 2000 seeds that remain viable for many years.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

MECHANICAL: Cutting or mowing before seed set can reduce seed production. Grazing pastures early can also be effective as cattle will eat young plants but ignore the unpalatable flowering stalks later in the season. Pulling small infestations of immature plants is feasible however pulling more mature infestations is seldom effective due to the difficulty in removing the long, branched roots. Field scabious can be controlled by cultivation. Heavily infested pastures/hayfields can be cultivated and rotated to an annual crop.

CHEMICAL: Several herbicides with the following active ingredients can control Field scabious: picloram, 2, 4-D, glyphosate and metsulfuron-methyl. For available products, contact your local agri-supply store or anywhere herbicides are sold. **Prior to any herbicide application, read and follow the label instructions**

This fact sheet was produced with funds from:



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