

NOXIOUS WEED FACT SHEET

Common Bugloss (*Anchusa officinalis*)



FAMILY: BORAGINACEAE



Description:

Common Bugloss is a deep-rooted perennial that reproduces by seed. It forms a rosette of basal leaves in its first year, then a blue-purple flowered stalk in the second year. Multiple stalks form in subsequent years.

Each flower stem starts out coiled like a fiddleneck, then straightens out as each flower bud opens. The stems are robust and hairy and grow 1 – 2 feet tall at maturity.

The lower leaves are lance shaped with a stalk attaching to its stems while upper leaves are stalkless with either smooth or slightly toothed edges. The slightly pointed leaves are succulent and fleshy and covered with stiff hairs.

The flowers are initially reddish, later turning to a deep blue to purple, sometimes pink, flower with white centers. The flowers originate at the ends of the stalks.

Common Bugloss has a long taproot and new shoots can develop from root stock fragments. Each flower produces 4 small, nutlet-like seeds. One plant can produce an average of 900 seeds, which can remain viable in the soil for several years.

Habitat:

Common Bugloss was originally found growing near Mead, WA. It has spread throughout most of north Spokane County with limited distribution in the south portions of the county. It invades pastures and rangelands and is a concern to alfalfa production because the succulent leaves and stalks mold the hay once it is baled.

Control Methods:

The most effective control of Common Bugloss is prevention. Above all, prevent plants from going to seed.

Cultural Control — To prevent plants from spreading from known infestations, carefully clean vehicles, boots, clothing and pets after visiting infested areas.

Plant competition is a good tool that is often overlooked and should be the first used. Restoring disturbed sites to prevent weed reoccurrences and provide competition to the weeds is essential.



Mechanical Control — Large, woody taproots make Common Bugloss very difficult to remove manually. Small infestations can be dug out with a pick or shovel, removing as much of the root as possible.

Control can be achieved with clean cultivation throughout the growing season, be sure the root is severed below the crown. Continuous mowing will prevent seed production, but will not eradicate the weed.

Chemical Control — For optimal control, spray with a broadleaf herbicide when the weed is still in the rosette stage. As the plant grows, you will need to use a higher rate of herbicide. Because the hairs on the leaves make it difficult for herbicides to penetrate the plant, you will need to add a surfactant to increase coverage.

It is important to remember that it will take a continuous effort to control Common Bugloss, regardless of what control method is used. Regrowth may occur in the same growing season and followup is key. If rosettes are found in the fall, spraying or cutting can help reduce spring populations.

Recommended herbicides: (always add a surfactant to spray mix)

May, June <i>Seedling/Rosette</i>	July <i>Bolting, Bud, Bloom</i>	August, September, October <i>Flowering, Seed, Fall Regrowth</i>
2, 4-D	2,4-D	Tordon* + 2,4-D
Prescott	Prescott	<i>Regrowth after mowing/fall regrowth:</i>
Telar	Tordon + 2,4-D	2,4-D
Perspective	Perspective	Telar

* **Tordon®** is the trade name for picloram and is a restricted use herbicide.

Read and follow all label instructions when applying herbicides. Trade names have been used to simplify instructions and no endorsement or warranty is expressed or implied.



Spokane County Noxious Weed Control Board

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For additional information on Noxious Weeds and the State Weed Law, visit our website at:
www.spokanecounty.org/weedboard