

Kochia

Kochia scoparia L. Goosefoot family

Key identifying traits

- ❑ Many-branched erect plant 1 to 6 feet tall
- ❑ Leaves are $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 inches long, alternate, narrow, lance shaped with hairy margins & undersides
- ❑ Stems round, usually softly hairy & often red-tinged
- ❑ Inconspicuous flowers form dense spikes in leaf axils
- ❑ Flowers are usually surrounded by cluster of long hairs
- ❑ Short, upper flower spikes often nod

Biology and ecology

- Tap-rooted summer annual; reproduces by seed
- Seeds are generally only viable for 1 or 2 years
- Flowering and seed production from July through October; several flushes of seedlings per season
- Common in Western US in cultivated fields, gardens, roadsides, ditchbanks and waste areas
- Readily grazed by livestock although it sometimes contains high nitrate levels and can be toxic
- A serious economic problem in crops
- Drought resistant but does well under irrigation
- Old plants spread seeds while tumbling

Control

Prevention - Learn to identify plants; know your property; control kochia along fencelines and roadways to reduce seed scatter by tumbling plants

Biological - No known biological controls

Cultural - Competitive vegetation helps avoid invasion and winter wheat withstands kochia better than spring wheat

Mechanical - Grazing and mowing will not stop seed production or kill the plant which will resprout from the stem; pull, hoe or cultivate to kill kochia; shallow tillage helps force seeds to sprout or decay

Chemical - Several effective at label rates, but kochia is often resistant to triazine & sulfonyleurea herbicides; rotating herbicides with different modes of action helps prevent resistance development

Where found - Limited numbers of plants but widely scattered distribution in Stevens County; mainly along roadsides, railroad, parking lots, gravel pits and piles, other highly disturbed sites.



kochia seedlings can form a solid mat

