

Diffuse & Spotted knapweed

Centaurea diffusa Lam. & *Centaurea biebersteinii* Lam.

Sunflower Family

Key identifying traits

Diffuse & Spotted KW are hybridizing in our county;
many plants have characteristics of both

- ❑ Many spreading branches with divided lower leaves; upper leaves are smaller and mostly undivided
- ❑ Diffuse kw flower bracts are tipped with definite slender spines
- ❑ Spotted kw flower bracts are dark tipped
- ❑ Bract margins divided like the teeth of a comb
- ❑ Leaves are grayish green, hairy and bitter
- ❑ Flowers are numerous; white to rose to purple

Biology and ecology

- Annual, biennial(usually) or short lived perennials
- Tap rooted and growing 1 to 4 feet tall
- Infest roadsides, waste areas and rangelands
- Highly competitive and invasive on dry sites
- Flowering occurs from early July to September
- Old DK plants break off, tumble and scatter seed. SK flower heads open and disperse most seed within a 3 to 4 foot radius of the plant

Control

Prevention - Learn to identify plants; know your property; beware of fill dirt, hay and seed from outside your area

Biological - Several established and common in this area and having some effect on density and vigor when found working together on roots and seeds- especially *Larinus minutus*

Cultural - Competitive vegetation helps but can be displaced; fertilizer and irrigation generally favor grasses and burning reduces seed dispersal

Mechanical - Tillage, digging, pulling & cutting will reduce or eliminate plants if repeated frequently, thoroughly & prior to seed production

Chemical - Several effective at label rates with rosette and early bolt best stages for treatment

Where found - Widely distributed in Stevens County and surrounding areas



typical diffuse



typical spotted

