



BLUEWEED

Echium vulgare



- ✦ Other names: Viper's-bugloss, blue devil
- ✦ Blueweed is a Class B Designate weed.
- ✦ A biennial or short lived perennial plant in the Boraginaceae Family. Blueweed spreads only by seed.
- ✦ Both stems and leaves of Blueweed are covered with short, stiff hairs. Flowering stems grow up to 36 inches tall and generally have conspicuous dark flecks at the bases of some hairs. Leaves are lance shaped, the undersides often have dark flecks and they grow in an alternating pattern, becoming smaller and stalk-less moving up the stem. Plants bloom from June through

August; seeds mature about a month after bloom. The bright blue, funnel shaped flowers are arranged on the upper side of the stems. Buds are reddish-purple, becoming bright blue at full bloom.

- ✦ Each plant can produce up to 2,800 seeds that can remain viable in the soil for several years.
- ✦ Caution is warranted in regards to this plant as it is believed to contain *pyrrolizidine alkaloids*, which cause liver damage leading to cirrhosis of the liver. Skin contact with the bristly hairs of the blueweed may cause dermatitis resulting in inflammation and itching.
- ✦ Blueweed does well in a variety of soil types, including poor soils, but does not tolerate shade. It grows on rangeland, rocky pastures, roadsides, waterways, and vacant lots.
- ✦ It is considered unpalatable to livestock because of its coarse hairs and toxic alkaloids.

CONTROL OPTIONS

- ✦ The most effective control of Blueweed is prevention. Above all, prevent plants from going to seed.
- ✦ Selective, translocated herbicides such as *Picloram* (used in Tardon and Grazon) and 2,4D are two herbicides that can be effective on blueweed.





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Pierce County Noxious Weed Control Board

- * Spot spraying with an herbicide containing the active ingredient *glyphosate* (used in Roundup Pro, or Glyphos) can also be effective. *Glyphosate* is non-selective however, and will injure any plants that it comes in contact with. Spot applications should be applied at bud stage, prior to blooming.
- * Carefully read and follow all herbicide label directions and restrictions. When using herbicides, read and follow all label instructions and obey all label precautions. (Note: pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.)



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