

# Mediterranean sage

*Salvia aethiopsis* L.

Mint Family

## Key identifying traits

- ❑ Woolly, upright, single-stalked plant; can reach 4' tall
- ❑ 4-12" long basal leaves have irregular margins and are on short stalks; upper leaves are opposite, smaller and clasp the stem
- ❑ Flowering stock is square in cross section and develops into a multi-branched inflorescence resembling a candelabra
- ❑ Many small white flowers are found in whorls at the tips of branches; 2 upper petals form a lip like a hooked beak, 3 lower petals form 3 lobes
- ❑ Leaves and stalks have a strong sage-like odor when crushed

## Biology and ecology

- Biennial or short-lived perennial with a stout taproot; spreads only through seed
- Mature plants break off just above the basal leaves allowing the seeds to be dispersed through tumbling or dragging by animals or equipment
- Grows in dryer, disturbed sites such as roadsides, and abandoned fields and seems to prefer south-facing slopes with loose, gravelly soils
- Mediterranean sage is native to southern and southeastern Europe

## Control

*Prevention* - Learn to identify plants; can be confused with common mullein in the rosette stage-must learn to distinguish; cleaning equipment is crucial

*Biological* - There are some established in states where infestations are large: not appropriate here

*Mechanical* - Digging at least 2-3" of taproot, mowing, or cultivation prior to seed set can all be effective

*Chemical* -Several herbicides- picloram, clopyralid or aminopyralid with 2,4-D & surfactant added should work well

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**Where found** – Found only on one site in west-central Stevens Co as of 2011.

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