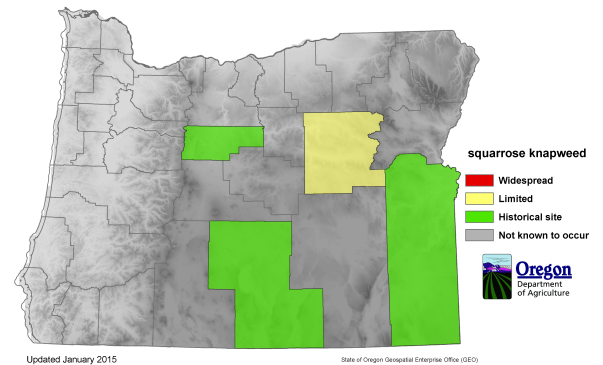


Please call 1-866-invader if you suspect you have found this species

Squarrose knapweed
Centaurea virgata

Other common names:

USDA symbol: CEVI
ODA rating: A and T



Introduction: Squarrose knapweed is native to the eastern Mediterranean region. It appears to have been introduced into the West in the 1800's as a contaminant of wheat and wool and started becoming noticeably weedy by the 1950s. Squarrose knapweed is one of the least widespread of our invasive *Centaurea*, but has the greatest potential for impacting Eastern Oregon's rangelands because it can form very dense stands even in healthy rangeland communities.

Distribution in Oregon: Squarrose knapweed was first documented in Oregon in 1988 at Long Creek, Grant County. It is treated annually in a containment program. Since then five additional sites have been confirmed and eradicated.

Description: Squarrose knapweed is a long-lived perennial knapweed growing 1½ to 3 feet tall. It is multi-branched, erect, with much slender, small, pink to rose-colored flowers that dislodge readily from the plant. Dispersal is unique among knapweeds as mature plants often break off and tumble in the wind dispersing intact seedheads across the landscape. Recurved flower bracts aid dispersal also by attaching to fur and clothing. Squarrose knapweed often grows on degraded rangeland soils and is more adaptable to drought and cold temperatures than spotted and diffuse knapweeds.

Impacts: Squarrose knapweed is a rangeland and pasture invader, rendering these areas marginal for grazing.

Biological controls: Biological control agents are not used on "A" listed weeds in Oregon. The species is being targeted for containment or eradication.



Oregon Department of Agriculture • Noxious Weed Control Program
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Photos by Dan Sharratt, ODA