

Diffuse Knapweed *Centaurea diffusa* L.

Diffuse Knapweed is a member of the Sunflower or Aster family. Diffuse knapweed was introduced from the Mediterranean Region of Eurasia and is a biennial or short-lived perennial forb, which reproduces only by seed. The plant usually produces a single main stem with numerous branches that is 1-1/2 to 2 feet tall and rough to the touch. It is known to have multiple stems produced from a single rosette. A basal rosette of leaves is present in young plants with each leaf divided into narrow segments. When leaves are young, thin hair hairs or nap are present. Stem leaves in the mature plant become much reduced as you ascend to the tip and alternate one per node. Flowers are mostly white to pink and rarely purple, and are located on each branch tip. The bracts surrounding each flower bear 4 to 5 pairs of lateral spines and one, long terminal spine. Diffuse knapweed can resemble spotted knapweed, with the easiest difference being the dark outlined bracts of the spotted knapweed. Also, diffuse knapweed has bracts that have distinct spines.

Diffuse knapweed can be found in pastures, riparian areas, roadsides, and waste areas. It is a tough competitor on dry sites and rapidly invades and dominates disturbed areas. Flowering occurs from July to September.

If you find this weed on your property or around Teton County, please report it immediately at 733-8419.

