

# Blueweed (*Echium vulgare*)

BW ECHI VUL

Erect biennial to short-lived perennial herb up to 1 metre tall. Introduced from North Africa as a garden ornamental



## Distribution

Fairly common in the Merritt area but in very limited numbers elsewhere.

**Please report  
all occurrences  
outside of the Merritt area.**

## Quick ID

Purplish-blue, funnel-shaped flowers.

Flowers on the upper side of short arching branches.

Seed stalk resembles a viper's head.

Entire plant is bristly/hairy.

## Interesting Facts:

Typically not eaten by grazing animals and thus increases in overgrazed areas.

## "Look-Alike" Species

Lupine, *Lupinus spp.*, appears similar but the main distinguishable difference is that lupines have leaves that are palmate shaped, that are smooth above and hairy below, and that are soft to the touch. The flowers are pea-like.



**Manual Treatment:** Hand pulling or digging is effective; done best when soil is moist. Wear gloves, avoid skin contact. If any portion of flower is beginning to emerge, or if seed heads are formed, pick, bag, and remove.



Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
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**Flowers:** Numerous bright, purplish-blue (occasionally white or pink), funnel-shaped flowers arranged on the upper side of short arching branches. Five petals. Buds are reddish-purple before opening.



**Leaves and Stems:** First year basal rosette radiates from central point. Rosette leaves have entire margins, taper towards the stalk, and are rounded at the tips. Flowering stalks grow from the rosette during the second year. Stem leaves are lance-shaped with entire margins, and are alternately arranged. Stem hairs are painful to touch.



**Seeds:** Fruit is a cluster of four angular, wrinkled seeds that are grayish-brown when mature. Each plant may produce up to 2,800 seeds.

**Roots:** Stout, black taproot with smaller fibrous lateral roots. Reaches 60cm long.

**Reproduction and Dispersal:** By seeds. Most seeds fall near the parent plant, but seeds also travel through infested gravel, water, animals, heavy machinery and vehicles.



**Habitat Preference:** Found in gravelly riparian areas, roadsides, pastures, and meadows at low to mid-elevations. Well-adapted to dry, rocky, sandy or shallow soils, especially glacial till.