



Diffuse Knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*)

DK CENT DIF

Biennial to short-lived, heavily branched taprooted perennial, growing from 0.6 to 1 metre in height.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Larinus minutus</i>			Overwintering Adult	Adult	Adult/ larva	Larva/ pup	Adult	Overwintering adult				
<i>Cyphocleonus achates</i>			Overwintering	Larva	Pupa	Pupa/ adult	Adult	Overwintering				



Distribution

Found extensively in the Southern Interior.

Quick ID

White (or pinkish-purple) flowers.
 Deeply lobed basal and lower stem leaves.
 Triangular floral bracts tipped with slightly re-curved spines.
 Stems break off at ground level after seed matures, creating a tumbleweed.

Interesting Facts:

A fertile hybrid between Diffuse and Spotted knapweed has been identified.

“Look-Alike” Species

Many native species of **Purple aster** appear similar at first glance, but can be distinguished by the presence of white or purplish petal-like ray flowers, a center of yellow disk flowers, and bracts below the flower heads in series of unequal length.



Manual Treatment: Cutting or mowing before seed-set can be effective to reduce seed production, but it will not eliminate large infestations. Cut plants and rosettes may survive and re-bolt. Hand-pulling can be effective on small infestations, but it often needs to be repeated, depending on the size of the initial weed population.



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Flowers: One white (or pinkish-purple) urn-shaped flower head, comprised of 12 to 13 disk flowers, develops on the end of each stem branch. The triangular floral bracts are tipped with a short, cream to brown-colored spine that is slightly recurved. Margins of bracts have slender, comb-like teeth.



Leaves and Stems: Coarse; covered with fine hairs that give them a grayish-green appearance. First year basal rosette has leaves up to 15.24 cm long with deeply lobed segments. Flowering stalks with alternate leaves grow from the rosette during the second year. Single main stem divides into numerous spreading branches on mature plant, giving it a bushy appearance.



Seeds: Oblong, 3 mm long, dark brown or grey.

Roots: Deep, elongated taproot.

Reproduction and Dispersal: Primarily by seed. Wind-blown 'tumbleweeds' help to disperse seeds greater distances.

Habitat Preference: Found in fields, roadsides and other open areas. Can spread rapidly in disturbed sites. Prefers well drained, light textured soils that receive ample sunlight. Prefers a drier site than Spotted knapweed.

