

Rush Skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*)

RS CHON JUN

Erect, long-lived perennial up to 1.2 metres tall. Three forms of the plant exist in the United States, each differing in flower characteristics and susceptibility to control measures. Native to Eurasia.



Distribution

Limited distribution in the Southern Interior.

Please report **all** occurrences.



Interesting Facts:

Competes with other plants for soil moisture and nutrients (esp. nitrogen).

Quick ID

Small yellow flowers scattered along branches.

Overall skeleton-like appearance.

Dandelion-like basal rosette leaves.

Reddish down-turned hairs at stem base.



Manual Treatment: Hand-pulling can be used on small infestations, but repeated treatments will likely be required because of the plant's extensive root system. Mowing and cultivation are ineffective at controlling rush skeletonweed (Sheley et al. 1999). Rotational grazing with sheep can control rush skeletonweed if the weeds are grazed at a moderate level while desirable plants are grazed lightly.



Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
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Flowers: Single, or clusters of 2 to 5, scattered, yellow flower heads. Seven to fifteen ray flowers clustered into a dandelion-like flower head. Ray flowers ('Petals') are flat across the end and terminate with distinct lobes.

Leaves and Stems: Foliage exudes a milky juice when cut or broken. A dandelion-like basal rosette with hairless leaves emerges upon germination, then withers as flower stem develops. Wiry, many branched stems have downward pointing, coarse, reddish hairs on bottom 10 cm of stem. Stem leaves are narrow, linear, and often inconspicuous.



Seeds: Light brown to black, ribbed seeds are about 3 mm long. Mature plants can produce up to 20,000 seeds per plant. Seeds require rainfall to establish.

Roots: Extensive, deep taproot can reach 2.5 meters, with occasional lateral root formation.

Reproduction and Dispersal: Disperses by seed and lateral root buds. Seeds are primarily dispersed by wind. Root fragments scattered by cultivation can also aid in spread.

Habitat Preference: Found in well-drained sandy or rocky soils in disturbed areas, cultivated areas, rangelands, pastures and roadsides. Rarely invades healthy native plant communities.

