



INVASIVE IN MN

SPOTTED KNAPWEED

Centaurea stoebe

HOW YOU CAN STOP THE SPREAD OF SPOTTED KNAPWEED

1

Remove it

Before spotted knapweed goes to seed, pull up whole plants — including the stout taproot — by hand or with a trowel or dandelion digger. (Wear long sleeves and gloves for protection; knapweed might irritate your skin.) Got a big patch? Mowing often can keep knapweed from seeding. MN DNR also suggests prescribed burns and natural predators (like some weevils).

2

Dispose of it mindfully

If you pull before it flowers, let the spotted knapweed decay where it is. But if it's flowered or gone to seed, bag what you've pulled and throw it in the trash or bring to an MDA-approved noxious weed composting site.

3

Follow up and replant

Pull seedlings and young growth. Plant native plants like blazing star or bergamot to compete with knapweed and provide habitat for wildlife.

HOW TO IDENTIFY SPOTTED KNAPWEED

Look for it in dry areas like prairies + farm fields + roadsides



In its first year, spotted knapweed only grows gray-green, lobed leaves in a basal rosette low to the ground. It won't flower until its second year.



In its second year, knapweed grows 2-3' high with wiry, hairy, branched stems, and slender and fewer leaves near each branch's top.



Before it blooms, knapweed has an egg-shaped flowerhead with dark upside-down V-shaped markings, or bracts, which are dry and fringed.



These flowerheads bloom into thistle-like plumes of pink to purple flowers, usually starting in June, which will later become feathery seeds.