

Field scabiosa

Knautia arvensis

Description

It escaped cultivation in British Columbia from its use as a garden ornamental.

Habit

Herbaceous perennial, erect, hairy and sparsely branched.

Leaves

Hairy; lower leaves are usually coarsely toothed, or sometimes entire, and form a basal rosette. Upper leaves are opposite and deeply, pinnately cut.

Stems

Stiff hairs angled downwards, but are not prickly.

Flowers

Blue to purple in color. Inflorescence is a dense composite of small florets clustered into a domed-shaped head resembling a single flower that occurs singly at the ends of stems. Below the flower head is a ring of narrow green bracts.





Fruits and Seeds

Fruit is nut-like, cylindrical, very small and hairy.

A single plant can produce up to 2000 seeds.

Habitat

Native to Europe. Found in roadsides, pastures, and meadows.

Reproduction

By seed or vegetatively.

Similar

Not likely to be confused with other plants. Similar looking plants can be found in the Pincushion family (*Scabiosa* spp.).

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Cut or mow plants before seed-set. Pulling is seldom effective due to difficulty in removing the long, branched roots. Tilling and cultivation of other species has been effective in controlling populations. Escort (metsulfuron-methyl) at 20 gr/ha (8.0 gr/acre) provides excellent control and should be applied to actively growing plants up to the early flower bud stage.

Credits

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