

Help Protect California Landscapes

Invasive Weed to Watch for:

Common Teasel



Common Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*)

What is a Noxious Weed?

A noxious weed is a category of invasive plant. Invasive plants are not native to the area, and tend to be very aggressive by outcompeting native plants for nutrients and water. By crowding out native plants, noxious weed infestations result in decreased plant diversity and decreased forage and habitat for native animals. Noxious weeds degrade fish and wildlife habitat, clog waterways, turn pastures into wastelands, disrupt forest regeneration, and overrun our forest and park areas. Although usually brought in accidentally, sometimes noxious weeds are introduced intentionally, especially when homeowners are looking for new and exotic landscaping specimens.

Did you know? Noxious weeds are the *second greatest threat to species conservation—second only to land development!*



Common Teasel Basal Rosette

Facts about Teasel

- ◆ Common teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) is a biennial forb/herb that is a member of the Dipsacaceae (Teasel) family and is native to Europe and temperate Asia. It is estimated that it was introduced to North America as early as the 1700s when it was likely cultivated as an ornamental as well as its role in the textile industry to raise the nap on woolen cloth.
- ◆ Common teasel is typically found in sunny and open sites, such as meadows, grasslands, forest openings, as well as disturbed sites.
- ◆ This plant remains a basal rosette during its first year of growth and later grows a 2 to 8 foot tall flower stem. After flowering, the stems become woody and persist through the following winter.
- ◆ Common teasel is a tap-rooted, monocarpic plant and dies after it flowers. A single flower head can produce on average around 850 seeds which are dispersed via water, soil movement, humans, and animals.
- ◆ Mowing old seed heads which contain viable seed can lead to the spread of this invasive plant along roadways and into various habitats.



Common Teasel Population

What to Look For:

- ◆ **Stems:** The second year flowering stem grows to be approximately two-to-eight feet in height. Striate angled and increasingly prickly going upward. Stems are pithy or hollow and have opposite branching.
- ◆ **Leaves:** As a rosette, leaves are dark green, spiny, and have a large white mid-vein. In its second year, leaves are opposite and form a cup where they intersect. Water can collect in the cup. Leaves become triangular, lance shaped, and can have spines on the top. Leaves can grow up to 12 inches long, and have a large white mid-vein covered in spines on the underside.
- ◆ **Flowers:** Common teasel produces a clustered seed head. Flowers are pink or purple and have 4 petals. Each plant produces multiple seed heads. Bracts below the seed head are long and curl beyond the seed head.
- ◆ **Fruit:** Seeds are rectangular, brown, and highly grooved. Seeds can remain viable in soil for approximately 3-5 years.
- ◆ **Roots:** Common teasel has a large taproot that can grow up to two feet long. Additionally, there are several fibrous roots.



Common teasel's white-to-lavender flowers

Control Methods:

Mechanical:

- ◆ Mowing Common teasel is ineffective because the root crown will re-sprout and flower after being cut. Also, cutting off the flower stalks at flowering and leaving the flowering heads is ineffective. Viable seeds can still develop from cut stems. Therefore, if cutting, ensure that flowering heads are removed from the natural area.
- ◆ Young rosettes can be dug up while ensuring that as much of the root is removed as possible. Very small seedlings can be pulled up by hand when the soil is moist.

Chemical:

- ◆ *Triclopyr, Clopyralid, Aminopyralid, Metsulfuron, and Glyphosate* have shown to be effective in controlling Common teasel. The most cost-effective method of herbicide control is applying the chemical during the rosette stage.

Biological:

- ◆ There are no known biological controls for Common teasel

Cultural:

- ◆ The best management approach to reduce the risk of Common teasel occupying an area is to promote a dense stand of vigorous deep-rooted native perennial grasses. Tall, dense and vigorous native perennial grasses with deep roots and a large root biomass will extract and use most of the resources (water, nutrients and sunlight). This condition reduces the potential for both seed germination and seedling establishment of Common Teasel.

Invasive weeds displace native plants and destroy healthy forests and parks.

Please

Help protect our native forest and park lands from weed invasion and preserve wildlife habitat.

What You Can Do:

- ◆ **Become familiar with local noxious weeds**
- ◆ **Report any weed sightings**
- ◆ **Do not plant invasive plants in gardens where they potentially could become a problem.**
- ◆ **If traveling from weed infested area, remove seeds and plant parts on clothing, pets, car/bike tires, etc. before returning to an un-infested area to prevent weed spread.**

To report suspected noxious invasive weeds in your area, please contact:

**El Dorado/Alpine County
Department of Agriculture,
Weights and Measures**

**311 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA
(530)621-5520
eldcag@edcgov.us**

