

Landowner / Operator Newsletter

SPRING

2017

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Board Meetings are open to the public and held on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7 pm from March — October
- Staff is available for education and outreach
- Future Events-Look for our booth at the BF Fair and Rodeo Aug 22 — Aug 26
- Visit our website at fcweedboard.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Wicked Weeds of Franklin County	2
Yellow starthistle	2
Skeletonweed	2
Kochia	3
Puncturevine - A Tacky Pest	3
Coordinator's Desk	3
Our Program In A Nutshell	4
For Our Weed Warriors	4

Ravenna grass — reclassified

Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*), is a Class B -designate noxious weed in Franklin County as of January 2017.

The invasive, ornamental grass was reclassified from a Class A to a Class B noxious weed following a hearing of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board. Class B status allows counties to customize their weed lists based on local needs. Franklin County Weed Board opted for B-designate status to continue countywide efforts toward eradication without losing ground on progress previously achieved.

Several infestations of Ravenna grass have been confirmed along the Columbia River, escaping from ornamental plantings. Landowners are cooperating with Weed Board staff to control these infestations. While many plants were eradicated in 2016 as a result of Class A status a significant number of infestations remain, degrading habitat and reducing property values.

By law landowners must prevent seed production and spread of all propagating parts of Class B weeds.

Removal and disposal of the purple inflorescence prior to seed maturation is a short-term fix as plants will produce new flowering stems requiring ongoing management.



Franklin County Weed Board staff recommends removing the grass along with the root system and replanting a non-invasive alternative. Visit our website for more details.



Native Balsomroot

Yellow starthistle is problematic in the dryland region of Franklin County.



Skeletonweed flower and rosette



Wicked Weeds of Franklin County

It's a beautiful spring day and you've decided to spend some time outside. As you are walking around your property, taking in the sights, something peeking through the grass catches your eye. You go over to investigate. Its bad news, you've got a noxious weed infestation. What do you do now?

Luckily, the Franklin County Noxious Weed Control Board is here to help! Give us a call and we can assist you in weed identification and important measures to take when controlling noxious weeds. Below we have provided information on Yellow starthistle, Rush skeletonweed, and kochia some of our most wicked Class B invaders.

Yellow starthistle — It's No Superstar

Yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) is a winter annual spreading exclusively by seeds. It germinates with fall or spring moisture, over winters as seedlings, flowering in the spring, and then dies in late spring as temperatures rise. One large plant can produce up to 75,000 seeds, which may lie dormant up to 10 years.

Yellow starthistle will grow wherever cheatgrass grows, and is easily recognized by its bright yellow flowers and long sharp spines below each flower. In Franklin County our dryland region hosts most of our Yellow starthistle infestations.

Depending on the size of the infestation, hand pulling can be quite effective but may turn your hands into pincushions. If the area is large chemical control may be the best option. Always apply herbicides according to the product label.

Rush skeletonweed — It's Scary

Rush skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*) is a highly-competitive and aggressive deep-rooted perennial forb. It can be a serious threat to wheat farming, fouling up harvesting machinery and contaminating crops. The best control strategy is preventing an invasion before it takes hold, and then eradicating small patches as soon as they appear.

Do not till or cultivate patches of skeletonweed; root fragments will develop into new plants and spread the infestation. Herbicide timing is crucial. The best time to apply on first year rosettes is in the early spring before bolting. The best approach for older plants is a fall, application when the weather has cooled, and the plant is moving nutrients down to its roots to survive winter.

Kochia – The Terrible Tumbler



Kochia (*Kochia scoparia*) is a tap-rooted summer annual reproducing from seed, typically yielding around 14,600 seeds per plant. There may be several flushes of growth throughout the growing season with adequate moisture. Seeds are dispersed in the fall when the plant tumbles with the wind, dropping seeds in its path.

Kochia can be toxic to a variety of grazing animals if large amounts are consumed. It spreads fast from the original plant, invades crops and pastures, is extremely drought resistant, and threatens agricultural production.

Kochia can be mowed or hand pulled depending on the size of the infestations. If the area is too large chemical control can be effective. The optimum timing of application is between 6 and 12 inches in height. Be aware that a seedbank will remain and need treatment in subsequent years.



Puncturevine – A Tacky Pest

March is the time to apply pre-emerge herbicide for puncturevine control. Puncturevine germinates when soil temperatures reach 60°.

Puncturevine can develop spiny burs within 5 weeks of germination

In Franklin County late May or early June coincides with puncturevine germination. A pre-emergent applied in March will work on the seedbank, preventing germination during the current growing season. This tacky plant grows rapidly, flowering within 3 weeks of emergence and producing spiny burs within 5 weeks. Each bur contains 3 types of seeds, germinating at different times so timing and persistence are key to control.



If the window for pre-emergent is missed a contact herbicide should be applied to the foliage in the early growth stage prior to flowering. Seeds remain viable for 8 years so property owners need to work on the seedbank for several seasons.

Coordinator’s Desk

There was no lull in Franklin County Weed Board (FCWB) activities this past winter as staff increased their own and the public’s knowledge of noxious weeds through training and outreach events. Winter is also a time for vehicle maintenance and modification. As we begin our 2017 season equipment and vehicles have been designed to deliver safe and efficient herbicide applications. In addition to addressing private landowner concerns, FCWB partners with several agencies providing technical assistance, noxious weed control, and vegetation management on public lands. With surveying underway we hope to identify noxious weed infestations at the onset and take an early detection, rapid response approach using best management practices. FCWB considers itself a resource for the community and aims to be approachable for guidance on noxious weed prevention and control. Todd Harris / Program Coordinator

If you fail
to plan,
plan to
fail.

Our Program In A Nutshell

The Franklin County Noxious Weed Control Board was established in 1986 to limit economic loss and adverse effects to agricultural productivity and protect natural and human resources from the degrading effects of noxious weeds. The spread of weeds causes economic loss for the entire community and creates a hardship on the producer. Our program is funded by the residents of Franklin County to survey, identify, and assist with the management of noxious weeds.

FCWB provides trained field staff for education and technical assistance to aid landowners in the identification and control of invasive noxious weeds with a focus on best management practices. FCWB emphasizes having a plan in place for keeping noxious weeds out once controlled. A comprehensive weed control program preserves future land use.

Our policy has always been to work with growers, landowners and agencies to develop practical plans for noxious weed control. Staff promote weed control through public encounters, educational seminars, publications, and regular Board Meetings. Plants grow without regard to property lines or political jurisdictions so everyone's cooperation is needed; city gardeners, farmers, government land agencies, and ranchers all have a role to play.

502 Boeing St Pasco, WA 99301 Phone: 509-545-3847
E-mail: fcwb@co.franklin.wa.us

For Our Wee Weed Warriors

WEED WORD SCRAMBLE

Please unscramble the words below

1. EEWD

2. SRUH OSLKEENDWETE

3. PIRNEUUCTVNE

4. YLWELO TS TTERLASIH

5. COIKHA

6. OUSNOXI

7. CTNYOU

8. SEESD

9. ANVNAER SRSAG

10. LKINNFAR

11. TOSOR

12. GRISPN

YELLOW STARHISTLE

RUSH SKELETONWEED

KOCHIA

PUNCTUREVINE

SEEDS

NOXIOUS

FRANKLIN

ROOTS

RAVENNA GRASS

SPRING

COUNTY

WEED