



Anchusa officinalis

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Common Bugloss

Common Alkanet, Ox's Tongue

Family: Boraginaceae

Origins: Native to Europe, it has been used for medicinal and ornamental purposes.

Range: Found throughout the United States. Infestations in Washington are more dense east of the Cascades.

Habitat: Commonly grows in sandy, gravelly areas such as roadsides, disturbed areas, fields, and pastures.

Impact: Common Bugloss is a threat to agriculture. It invades alfalfa fields and pastures out competing commercial and forage species. The fleshy stalk can cause mold in bailed hay. Each plant may produce 900 seeds, which can remain viable in the soil for many years.

Common Bugloss seeds have been found in mixed seed packets. Review the ingredients of wildflower mixes to avoid accidental introduction, and avoid using wildflower mixes with unidentified seed components.

Description: Common Bugloss is a deep-taprooted, perennial herb that grows 1 to 2 feet tall. It typically grows as a rosette the first year, produces a single flowering stalk the second year, and may grow multiple stalks from a single taproot in subsequent years. The stems and leaves are fleshy, and the overall plant is coarsely hairy. The basal leaves are narrowly oblong, while stem leaves are progressively smaller up the stem, stalkless and clasping.

The blue to purple flowers have five equal lobed petals, with white throats forming an uncurved tube. The flowers develop in helicoid (spiral) clusters at the end of the stems. As the flowers open, these spirals unfold and straighten out. Flowers bloom from May to October.

Common Look-Alikes: Annual Bugloss, Vipers Bugloss, Purple Viper's Bugloss, Blueweed.

** Unknown, many plants in the borage family contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which are toxic to people and animals.*



Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed's IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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Non-Herbicide Control

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Small infestations can be dug out, but make sure to remove the taproot and dispose of it in a sealed bag to prevent resprouting. Cut and bag all flower heads to reduce seed production.
Cultural	Do not introduce this plant to your garden. Maintaining healthy, desirable vegetation can help prevent Common Bugloss infestations. Prevent seed spreading to new sites by cleaning clothing, animals, equipment, etc, before leaving an infested site.
Biological	Biological agents are currently not available for Common Bugloss in Washington State.

Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

2,4-D (Many Trade Names)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plants before flowering. Remarks: Annual treatments needed to control seedlings; avoid drift to sensitive crops; for best results, add a surfactant; do not apply near water; use with a non-ionic surfactant.
Dicamba + 2,4-D (Weedmaster, Range Star)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plants before flowering. Remarks: Avoid drift to sensitive crops; for best results, add a surfactant; refer to label for crop rotation restrictions; grass tolerates Dicamba; do not apply near water; use with a non-ionic surfactant.
Glyphosate (Rodeo, Killzall, Kleenup, Roundup)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plants before flowering. Remarks: Spray complete uniform coverage, but not to the point of runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; Glyphosate is nonselective and may injure or kill any vegetation it contacts; repeat treatments may be necessary; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.

* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), nwcb.wa.gov. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.