



PUNCTUREVINE

(Tribulus terrestris)

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? Puncturevine is a low growing annual that can make dense mats up to 5 feet across. Small ½ inch, 5 petal yellow flowers appear soon after germination followed by seed capsules with 2 sharp spines resembling the head of a goat often giving the plant the common name of goatheads.

WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO GROW? This plant grows best in dry, loose, sandy soils but can survive in almost any type of soil. Usually reported first near agricultural sites or railroad yards, the weed is often found in hay, straw or manure.

WHEN DOES IT BLOOM? Puncturevine begins germinating during warm spring weather and continues until frost. Bright yellow flowers will begin to appear as early as 3 weeks after germination with seeds appearing one to two weeks later. The flowering time extends from June to October. Flowers are only open in the morning.

HOW DOES IT MAKE NEW PLANTS? Puncturevine reproduces from seed only. Woody, spiny fruits with five segments, that will split when ripe, each contain one to four seeds. The spiny fruit segments help the seed to spread. Large and small seed spines are arranged at different angles, so that no matter how the seed falls, at least one spine points upward to meet the unsuspecting foot, hoof, paw, vehicle or bicycle tire. The sharp spines easily penetrate leather, rubber tires, skin, or other surfaces, and may be transported some distance before being knocked or picked off.



HOW DO I CONTROL IT? As with all noxious weeds, prevention is the best control. Don't allow fields and pastures to become unhealthy and bare. The use of fertilizer to encourage strong growth of grasses is highly recommended.

NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Don't allow the plants to flower. Hoe, dig or till out seedlings as soon as you discover them.
- Puncturevine can be controlled with mulches in ornamental plantings, orchards, vineyards, vegetable crops and gardens.
- Two species of weevils were introduced into the United States for puncturevine control in 1961. Larvae of *Microlarinus lareynii* attack the seed, and larvae of *Microlarinus lypriformis* attack the plant stems. Together they provide effective puncturevine control over large areas. The insects have yet to establish in Idaho or Washington.

CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Many herbicides are reported to be effective, either pre-or post emergent. Several applications of post emergent herbicide will be necessary to control seedlings after each rainfall or watering. Contact the Noxious Weed Control Office for a list of herbicides that will control puncturevine.

Want more information? Contact:

Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control
10905 N. Ramsey Road
Hayden, ID 83835
208-446-1290 / TTY 208-446-2145
kcnoxioussweeds@kcgov.us or www.kcweeds.com

Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208)446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.