

POLICEMAN'S HELMET



BOTANICAL NAME: *Impatiens glandulifera*

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? This annual plant can grow 3 to 8 feet tall with hollow upright stems that have a reddish or purple tinge. The root system is small and shallow. The 6 inch long leaves are oblong with serrated edges. The flowers, which resemble an English policeman's helmet, can be white to all shades of pink and purple. This plant is also known as Himalayan Balsam. The State of Idaho listed this plant on their noxious weed list in 2007.

WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO GROW? Policeman's helmet likes to grow in sun or partial shade and is tolerant of many soil types. This plant requires high moisture content in the soil, but not necessarily standing water. You can find this plant growing in lowland, riparian areas which include wetlands, moist forests, in roadside thickets and stream and river edges. Policeman's helmet is often found in home flower gardens.

WHEN DOES IT BLOOM? The orchid-like flowers begin appearing in mid-June and will continue blooming through October.

HOW DOES THIS PLANT SPREAD? Seed production begins in late summer through fall until the first frost. A single plant can produce from 800 to 2500 seeds which are large and black. The seeds can be dispersed from mature capsules at the slightest touch, exploding the seeds as far as 20 feet from the plant. The seeds will overwinter then germinate in the spring when conditions are favorable. This plant has been spread by gardeners giving starts to others.



HOW DO I CONTROL IT? Action needs to be taken as soon as you see the seedling emerge in the spring. This is an easy plant to control any time during its life cycle.



NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Pull, hoe or dig these plants anytime. Since they have a small, shallow root system, they are easy to remove.
- Do not share this plant with others or accept any plants from other people. It is an extremely aggressive and invasive plant.

CHEMICAL CONTROL: Most herbicides will control policemen's helmet. Check with the Noxious Weed Control Office for herbicide recommendations.

Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control
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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.