

## Brown Knapweed (*Centaurea jacea*)

### Description

Perennial plant that can reach 30-150 cm tall. Basal leaves are up to 15 cm long, tapering at both ends with the broadest part above the middle of the leaf. Stem leaves are lance-shaped, shallowly-lobed and stalkless. Flowers are rose-purple in color, rarely white, up to 2.5 cm wide. Heads are solitary at the ends of the upper branches. The bracts of brown knapweed are light to dark brown, with a papery, translucent margin.

Ridged stems and sometimes purple-striped.

### Key Identifiers

- ✓ Leaves entire or toothed, basal ones broadly elliptic and occasionally lobed
- ✓ Bracts that are without comb-like fringe and that have a brown, papery, translucent tip.
- ✓ Woody crown root
- ✓ Well visited by nectar insects
- ✓ Brown knapweed prefers moister, cooler conditions than the other knapweed species

### Location in Canada

BC, NB, Ontario and Quebec are all known to have this knapweed. Alberta does have one isolated report from CFB Wainwright but population has been eradicated and is being monitored.

### Resources

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/cepublications/pnw0432/pnw0432.pdf>

### Similar species

(*Centaurea* spp.) Other knapweeds are going to be similar to brown knapweed. The key feature for differentiating all knapweeds from one another is to compare the unique bracts. The link under "Resources" is an excellent resource to walk you through identifying knapweeds.

May be mistaken for a thistle at a passing glance but upon inspection, all parts of brown knapweed lack spines.



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