



Metolius Mule Deer Winter Range

Slowing the Spread of Invasive Species



Dangerous invaders

The spread of dangerous, harmful weeds has had a negative effect on the Metolius Mule Deer Winter Range and across Central Oregon. Invasive species often out-compete native vegetation, reducing habitat quality and the availability of nutritious food for wildlife. Unlike native plants, which have deep root systems holding soil in place, these noxious weeds have shallow roots that cause erosion, potentially contributing to poor water quality in nearby streams.



Unfortunately, human activity has helped these invaders spread rapidly. There are several ways you can help us slow down, and eventually stop, these harmful species:

- Wash vehicles regularly and check undercarriages for hitchhiking plants
- Inspect clothing and shoes for clinging seeds when traveling between locations
- Report large infestations to the appropriate [county weed program](#)
- Volunteer for weed-pulling events with local conservation groups
- Feed your domestic animals a certified weed-free diet before trips ([learn about weed-free feed](#))
- If you are a landowner, manage weed infestations on your land

Identifying noxious weeds

Help us stop the spread of invasive species by learning how to identify the most common culprits. Some weeds have two growth forms: a leafy rosette (young form) that sits near the soil and an upright form (mature) that produces flowers and seeds. Learn how to spot these plants on page 2.



Continuing weed management

Protecting the Winter Range is critical for the survival of sensitive animal species in the high desert. Help us maintain this important site and its wildlife by promoting the growth of native vegetation and limiting the spread of noxious weeds.

For more information about invasive species management, visit Oregon's [Noxious Weed Profiles website](#) and its [Frequently Asked Questions page](#). To help with local weed-pulling efforts, check out SOLVE Oregon's [Let's Pull Together program](#). For the next generation of responsible land-users, download this fun [noxious weed coloring book](#).



Spotted, Diffuse and Russian Knapweeds

(*Centaurea* sp., *Acroptilon repens*)

- One or more branched stems
- Branches topped with a single white to pinkish-purple flower
- Flower heads are narrow and have bracts (small, colorful leaves)
- 1-3 feet tall
- Grow on roadsides, rangeland, pastures



Scotch, Canada and Bull Thistles

(*Onopordum acanthium*, *Cirsium* sp.)

- Many branched stems
- Leaves are spiny
- Pinkish to deep purple flowers clustered at the end of branches, typically large (3/4-2 inches)
- 1-5 feet tall (Scotch Thistle can grow to 12 feet)
- Grow on roadsides, rangeland, pastures



Medusahead

(*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)

- Aggressive winter annual grass with spike of densely crowded, twisted awns
- Grows 6-24 inches tall
- Found in clay soils and commonly infests rangeland



Yellow Starthistle

(*Centaurea solstitialis*)

- Many branched, winged stems, topped with a single yellow flower with long yellow spines
- 1-5 feet tall
- Commonly grows on roadsides, open rangeland



Cheatgrass

(*Bromus tectorum*)

- Winter annual grass covered in soft, dense hair
- Bright purple-green, drooping seedhead
- Grows 4-30 inches tall
- Common on roadsides, rangeland, disturbed areas



Common Mullein

(*Verbascum thapsus*)

- Large flowering stalk with yellow-petaled flowers and large fuzzy leaves
- Grows 2-10 feet tall
- Thrives in sand and gravel on roadsides, pastures, rangeland



Puncturevine

(*Tribulus terrestris*)

- Forms a dense mat, with stems made of 4-8 paired leaflets.
- Yellow flowers with 5 small petals develop into circular, spiny seeds
- Common on roadsides, pastures, disturbed areas



Yellow Flag Iris

(*Iris pseudacorus*)

- Long, flat, sword-like leaves and bright yellow flowers with 3 petals growing from stems
- Leaves reach up to 4 feet tall
- Produces disc-like seeds
- Grows along lakes, rivers, ponds, irrigation ditches



Whitetop, Hoary Cress

(*Lepidium draba*)

- Blue-green leaves, many white four-petaled flowers
- Flower collections have a flat-top and form dense patches on moist soils.
- Common in pastures, disturbed areas



Ventenata

(*Ventenata dubia*)

- Annual winter grass with slim, hollow stems, reddish-black nodes and lax seedhead with bent awns.
- Grows 4-18 inches tall.
- Common on roadsides, rangeland, in dry forests

* Used with permission from the Oregon Department of Agriculture.