

Skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*)

Description: Rush skeletonweed is a tap-rooted perennial plant native to central Asia. This weed germinates in the fall when the rains begin, and develops one or more rosettes from buds on established roots. Leaves are lance-shaped, one-half inch wide and up to two inches long, with a reddish color near the tips during winter. When daylight increases in spring, the plant is stimulated to develop a multi-branched upright stem from the root crown. Flower production begins when stems reach maximum length in midsummer and continues until ended by frost. Rosette leaves die off during flowering, leaving a skeleton-like appearance to the plant. Flower buds, blooming flowers and mature seeds are often on the same stem at the same time. After flowers fall, new rosettes are again established, continuing the cycle.



The root system is slender and vertical, penetrating the soil to depths of eight feet or more. Roots develop laterally in the upper two feet of the soil profile. A research paper from Australia states that rush skeletonweed will sprout from root segments of any length.

Impacts: This species to be very adaptable, preferring gravelly well-drained soils. The plant's extensive root system enables it to compete effectively with crops. Agricultural yields may see up to a 70 percent decrease if skeletonweed is left uncontrolled. Native plants can be displaced and wildlife forage is reduced.

Control Options:

► Manual Techniques

Digging and manually removing the plants was tried when this species was first discovered in Thurston County. These have not proven effective because of the extensive root system which has the ability to regenerate from below the soil surface following removal of the above-ground portions of the plant. Using manual control, we were unable to stop the spread of rush skeletonweed, but not control the actual infestations as evidenced by a very low success rate of 12.5 percent.

► Chemical Techniques

Currently, products containing the active ingredient *glyphosate* are the only herbicides for the control of rush skeletonweed that are considered "low in hazard" by Thurston County's pesticide review process.

Only products with concentrated formulations of *glyphosate* will be effective. Pre-mixed products do not contain enough *glyphosate* to be effective, use products with at least 40% *glyphosate* .

Foliar applications of ROUNDUP PRO™ (a 41% *glyphosate* product):

Skeletonweed can be controlled by using no less than 2% *glyphosate*

- Spot applications with *glyphosate* products are effective. Spot application means the herbicide is applied only to the plants and not on the surrounding plants or soil. Spray each plant thoroughly on the stems and leaves enough to be wet but not dripping.

Rates, at 4 lb. per gallon A.I.:	2 Percent
To 1 gallon of water add	2.66 oz. ROUNDUP PRO™

- Remove domestic livestock before application and wait 14 days after spot application before grazing livestock or harvesting.
- Do not enter or allow worker entry into treated areas during the restricted entry interval of 12 hours. Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.

Products containing the active ingredient **aminopyralid (Milestone™)** are considered “moderate in hazard” and are also a second choice for chemical control.

Foliar applications of aminopyralid (Milestone™)

- Follow all label precautions and safety measures. Always use personal protective equipment that includes long sleeve shirt and long pants, shoes plus socks.
- As a spot treatment only at a rate of 4 to 6 ounces (pastures section) fluid ounces per acre. Do not apply more than 7 fluid ounces per acre per year.
- Do not enter into treated areas during the restricted entry interval of 12 hours. Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.
- Do not use aminopyralid-treated plant residues, including hay or straw from treated areas or manure from animals that have grazed there within the previous 3 days. Manure from animals that have grazed from treated areas within the previous 3 days may be used on grass areas only as injury could occur to susceptible broadleaf plants.

Timing:

- Control should take place when plants are actively growing and before seeds are produced.



READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL DIRECTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS. Obey all label precautions and safety measures. Always use personal protective equipment that includes coveralls, waterproof gloves, shoes plus socks, and protective eyewear. Use of brand names does not connote endorsement and is for reference only; other formulations of the same herbicides may be available under other names. Information provided is current as of the date of the fact sheet. Pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.



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