

GOT KNAPWEED? Citizens of Alpine MUST unite against spotted knapweed

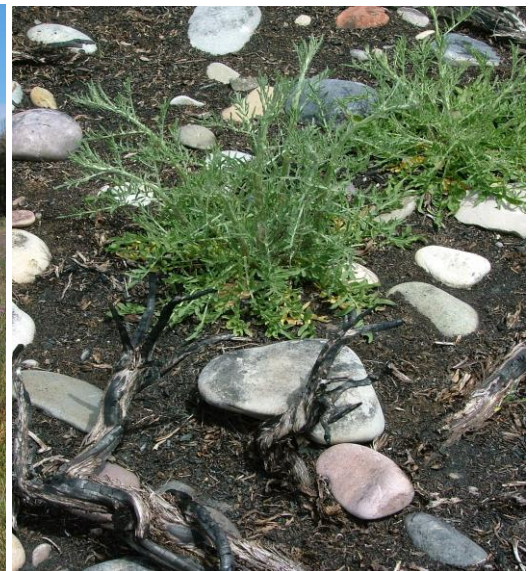
If you live in Alpine, it is very likely that you have been a host to the foreign invader called spotted knapweed. If it has not yet taken root on your property, you surely have seen it inhabiting road easements, vacant lots, and untended yards throughout Alpine.



Spotted knapweed is closely related to thistle, but its leaves have no spines. The black “spots” on its bracts aid in identification.

This thistle-like flowering plant is native to Asia. It was accidentally introduced into the U.S. in 1900 in a contaminated shipment of alfalfa seeds. It has since spread throughout the country, significantly reducing the economic and ecological value of the land it invades.

Spotted knapweed was first discovered in western Wyoming in 1974 on ranchland bordering the Gros Ventre river. Its seeds had likely hitchhiked to the ranch in a shipment of hay. By 1999, it was evident that this infestation had spread, following the river corridors throughout Teton County and down to Alpine. Spotted knapweed is now so widespread in Alpine, realtors have given it the name “Alpine Grass.” But don’t let the euphemism fool you – spotted knapweed and other noxious weeds decrease our property values!



Spotted knapweed easily outcompetes native plants, allowing it to spread and form dense monocultures. The allelopathic chemicals released by its roots make the land inhospitable to other plants, decreasing land values.

Spotted knapweed exudes a chemical from its roots that inhibits the germination of other plants around it, turning your yard into a solid stand of knapweed. This makes gardening and landscaping difficult because nothing else will readily grow in a knapweed stand. According to the Wyoming Weed and Pest Control Act of 1973, we are legally required to eradicate these and other listed noxious weed species from our properties. The longer we let them grow unchecked, the more expensive and time-consuming it will be to remove them.

In 2020, a group of Alpine residents decided to take a stand against this noxious weed invasion that threatens our property values and the integrity of our natural areas. We formed the Alpine Noxious Weed Advisory Committee (ANWAC) with a mission to educate the government and residents of Alpine on how to identify and treat noxious weeds on their property. That same year, the Town of Alpine passed **273 Ordinance No. 2020-02 Regulating Noxious Weeds** on private property. This ordinance and its enforcement will be a discussion item at **the September 2nd Town Council meeting**. Please read the ordinance on the town website and consider participating in the September 2nd meeting.

We live in Alpine because we share a love for the mountains, forests, waters, and wildlife that surround us. Let's work together to protect this special place from the irreversible damage caused by noxious weed invasion.

Thank you!

Meta Dittmer

ANWAC

8/25/25