

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

growth

Perennial with roots often exceeding 20 feet in depth. Plants develop from pinkish root buds from any depth. Plants emerge early in the spring and the seedlings appear reddish. Vegetative reproduction occurs from crown buds and root buds, forming very dense stands.

flower

Midsummer stems are tipped by several pairs of showy, yellowish-green, heart-shaped bracts (each up to 1/3 inch across), which enclose a small flower. Flowering May- July and again in the fall.

leaves

Leaves are narrow and up to 4 inches long. Stems and leaves exude a milky latex when broken.

stems

Stems grow up to 3 ft in height. The naked stem axis is woody enough to persist from summer to summer

fruit

and remnants of it can be seen at the base of newly emerged shoot.

Ripe seed capsules rupture when touched, throwing seeds as far as 15 ft. Seeds ripen and disperse mid to late July. Plants turn a reddish or golden yellow in the fall before dropping leaves.

Note leafy bracts below fruit.



flower color

Elevation:

Approx. 4000-9000
feet

Ecotypes Invaded:

Alpine and sub-alpine grasslands & montane conifer forests.

ECOLOGY & DISTRIBUTION

Occurs primarily in untilled, non-cropland habitats, which include disturbed and undisturbed sites such as abandoned cropland, pastures, rangelands, woodlands, prairies, roadsides, and wastelands.

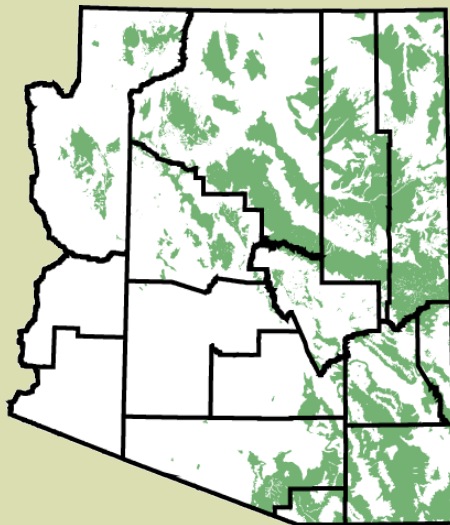
Tolerant of a wide range of habitats and may occur in rich damp soils such as on the banks of streams or on extremely nutrient poor, dry soils like rangelands of the west.

It is most aggressive in semi-arid situations where competition from associated species is less intense.

Infestations generally occur and spread rapidly on dry hillsides, dry prairies, or rangelands.

The plants tend to occur on all soils but tend to grow most rapidly in coarse-textured soils.

SUITABLE HABITAT



Suitable habitat based on the Arizona Wildlands Invasive Plant Working Group (AZ-WIPWG) assessment. Green = suitable habitat; White = unsuitable habitat; Gray = unknown. Based on Brown, Lowe & Pase (1980) vegetation communities.

