

Wednesday
September 24th,
2025

Weed Wednesday

Foothills County

Issue #11



Field Scabious – *Knautia arvensis*

Designation- Noxious

Field Scabious is native to Europe and was brought to Canada as an ornamental plant. Its beautiful flower is deceiving as this aggressive invader will establish in undisturbed plant communities. It is a perennial that invades hay fields and pastures as well as roadsides. It can grow in gravelly soil but prefers nutrient rich and moderately dry soil.

Field Scabious has a hairy, erect stem and can grow up to 1.5m tall. It can have multiple stems or one per plant. It is sparsely branched and may have no branching in the upper stem.

The leaves are covered in hair and are arranged oppositely on the stem. On young rosettes, the leaves are often lance shaped with a smooth or coarse margin. Its leaves become lobed and are directly connected to the stem.



Field scabious's
lower leaves are 10-
25 cm long.



Field scabious seeds can be transported in baled forage.

The lower leaves are the largest and leaf size shrinks as you move up the plant. The flowers range in color from violet-blue to purple and are clustered into a single head that occurs singly at the end of stems. Beneath the flower head, it has a ring of green bracts.

Field scabious only reproduces by seed, but a single plant can produce up to 2000 seeds. The seeds can be viable in the soil for years and require many years of diligent control to eradicate.

Cultivation prior to flower is an effective control method in croplands. Hand pulling or mowing can prevent seed production but will require repeated efforts throughout the season. Its deep taproot in combination with its brittle stem often led to the stem breaking off at ground level allowing it to re-sprout.

Metsulfuron-methyl alone or in a product mix with Aminopyralid are registered for use on Field Scabious. Always check product labels to ensure the herbicide is registered for use on the target plant and don't hesitate to reach out to agricultural services for more information.

Field Scabious is also known as Bachelor's button or Gipsy rose. Instead of planting Field Scabious, consider Wild Bergamot.

If you would like more information, please contact Kathleen at Kathleen.mchugh@foothillscountyab.ca or at 403-603-5409.

References- [N_FS-FieldScabious.pdf](#)