

Field Bindweed
Convolvulus arvensis

Currently in Montana, noxious weeds infest about 7.6 million acres (Montana's Noxious Weed Management Plan, 2008). Many of these state listed noxious weeds were brought to America as ornamentals for gardens, medicinal purposes, by accident in discarded soil from a ship's ballast or unintentionally in bags of seed brought from other parts of the world. Whatever the cause of introduction, 32 non-native plant species have found their way onto Montana's state noxious weed list.

Field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), is a Priority 2B listed noxious weed in the state of Montana. Priority 2B species are noxious weeds that are abundant in Montana and widespread in many counties. Management criteria for these species includes eradication or containment where these species are less abundant. Management for these species shall be prioritized by local weed districts. Species listed as Priority 2B noxious weeds are: Canada thistle, field bindweed, leafy spurge, whitetop, Russian knapweed, spotted knapweed, diffuse knapweed, dalmation toadflax, St. Johnswort, sulfur cinquefoil, common tansy, oxeye daisy, houndstongue, yellow toadflax, and saltcedar.

Field bindweed is native to Eurasia and was likely introduced into the United States in contaminated crop seed as early as 1739. Field bindweed typically inhabits roadsides, grasslands and along streams, it can also be a nuisance in flowerbeds and gardens. Because field bindweed can produce thick dense mats it is very detrimental to agricultural production because it intertwines with surrounding vegetation and chokes out those plants, and eventually takes over. Field bindweed is a member of the morning glory family. It is a creeping herbaceous perennial that is easily recognizable by its trumpet shaped flowers that range in color from white to pale pink with five slightly darker pink radial stripes; flowers are $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" in diameter and bloom in mid-summer. Leaves of field bindweed are about 2 to 5 cm long and are linear to arrowhead in shape. Field bindweed reproduces through rhizomatous shoots or underground lateral stems and through the production of fruits. Fruits produced are light brown in color and are round in shape and measure about 1/8 inch, each fruit contains 2 seeds. One single field bindweed plant can produce up to 500 seeds. The seeds are a favorite food for many species of birds; when eaten and discarded, seeds can remain viable in the soil for many years.

Field bindweed is difficult to eradicate due to the fact that the seeds can remain viable in the soil for up to 20 years. Another factor that makes this plant so difficult to get rid of is that the root system stores carbohydrates and proteins which allow the plant to sprout repeatedly from fragments and lateral underground roots following removal of above ground plant parts. With this in mind, field bindweed is best controlled with herbicides.

Please take a few moments to learn about field bindweed and each of the other state listed noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are not currently a problem in your area, they may be in the near future. For more information about Montana's state listed noxious weeds, regulated plants, or weed species listed on your county weed list, please contact your local county weed district (can list weed district name here... ex: Lewis & Clark County Weed District) at (406)_(Phone number). Or you can contact the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-3144.