



903 N. Black Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59715
(406) 582-3265

RUSH SKELETONWEED MANAGEMENT TIPS

Rush skeletonweed, a member of the Sunflower family, is a perennial forb with a taproot. The yellow flower can be either single or clustered in groups of two to five. Mature plants usually grow two to three feet tall and can produce up to 20,000 seeds. **Seed longevity is at least one year.** Reproduction is by seed and by root buds. Thick white latex exudes from the leaves, stems and roots. Rush skeletonweed invades dry rangelands, displaces native species and reduces forage for wildlife and livestock.



Management actions should focus on reducing seed production and depleting root reserves. Control efforts must be planned for several consecutive growing seasons to be successful. Monitoring for new growth either from seeds or root buds and treating new plants as soon as possible is critical.

Rush skeletonweed is in the early stages of invasion in Montana, with only locally occurring populations. Containment and eradication of existing populations, as well as early detection and prevention of new invasions are the primary goals for management. If you think you have found this plant, please contact your local county Weed District.

Effective control measures for the management of rush skeletonweed include:

- 1. Mechanical (hand pulling & digging):** Hand pulling and digging can be very effective for small infestations, if the area is monitored for many years and new plants are removed. Remove as much of the root as possible and place flowering plants in bags to prevent seed dispersal. Wear gloves when pulling or digging plants.
- 2. Herbicide: Always follow directions on the label. The label is the law!** Calibrate your equipment to ensure that you are adding the proper amount of herbicide to your tank. The following herbicides are commonly used to control rush skeletonweed. **Do NOT use these herbicides in lawns, turf or ornamental settings – read the label.** *For the most effective control, apply herbicides when plants are in the rosette stage up to the early bolting stage.*

Mixing rates in small backpack or hand sprayers are as follows:

Milestone:	1 – 1.25 teaspoons herbicide to 1 gal of water.
*Opensight:	1/2 – 2/3 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gal of water.
*Chaparral:	1/2 – 2/3 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gal of water.
DuraCor:	0.5 oz herbicide to 1 gal of water.
Tordon 22K (restricted use herbicide):	1 - 2 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water.

Rates in large sprayers are as follows:

Milestone:	5 - 7 oz herbicide per acre.
*Opensight:	2.5 – 3 oz herbicide per acre.
*Chaparral:	2.5 – 3 oz herbicide per acre.
DuraCor:	18 oz herbicide per acre.
Tordon 22K (restricted use herbicide):	1 - 2 quarts herbicide per acre.

NOTE: Adding 2,4-D to your tank with any of the above herbicides may improve performance. Add at the rate of 1 – 2 quarts per acre for large sprayers or 1 – 2 ounces per gallon of water for backpack sprayers.

NOTE: Adding a surfactant to your tank mix may enhance the performance of your herbicide and is required for certain herbicides (read the label). Add 0.5 - 1 oz per gallon of water for backpack sprayers or 1 – 2 pints per 100 gallons for large sprayers.

*** denotes that a surfactant is required for the herbicide to be effective**

- 3. Grazing:** Rush skeletonweed is good forage for sheep in the rosette to early bolting stages. Continuous grazing will prevent flowering and seed production.
- 4. Integrated management:** Management of rush skeletonweed is more effective when more than one strategy is used.