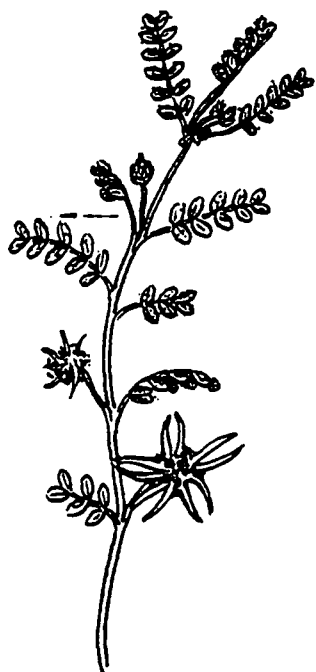


Puncture Vine

(Tribulus terrestris)

Where does it grow? Generally along railroads, roadsides, barnyard lots, livestock loading yards, some fairgrounds and occasionally in pastures and range land. Road shoulders and other dryland sites are "ice-cream" for this weed plant.



Puncture vine forms a mat and grows mainly along roadsides. Flowers are small and yellow, and seeds are borne in sharp, pointed star-shaped pods (1 x).

Is it important? First recorded report of the plant in Oregon was in Umatilla County at the railroad yards in Pendleton in 1927. It was reported as having been introduced from California. It is well scattered now.

In 1948 Sheep Dog Trials were held at Washington Field in Pendleton. In 1949 the trials were discontinued because thorns of puncture vine caused the dogs to quit walking.

Bicycle repairmen refuse to try to repair tires flattened by a puncture vine spine. Burs are readily picked up and carried by tires and by the fur, feet, and wool of animals. It is spread also by hay and other crops, such as melons.

In the weed community we usually think of the perennials as the "toughies" but this one, though only an annual, is bad. It came from the Mediterranean region.

What does it look like? The plant is bright green with stems radiating, star-like, from the crown. On open ground it lies flat against the ground. In a thick stand of grass or alfalfa the plant grows almost erect.

Leaves grow in pairs on opposite sides of the stem. They are made up of several pairs of small oval leaflets that are 3/16 of an inch wide and about half an inch in length.

Quite often the stems are reddish. Like the foliage they are densely covered with silky hairs. This gives the whole plant a silvery look. Flowers are small and bright yellow. Burs occur as a cluster of five spiny nutlets. These burs look like a goat's head, which is what this pest is sometimes called.

Description:

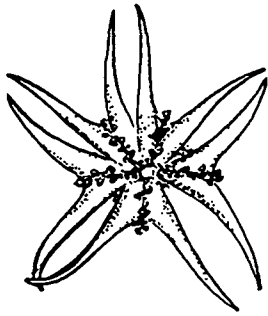
Life span -- Annual.

Height -- Prostrate, sometimes upright, if occurring in thick growth.



OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
**EXTENSION
SERVICE**

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Description:

Length of stems -- Dry areas, up to about 6 inches; up to 2 feet on good sites.

Growth period -- Starts growing late spring or early summer. Grows rapidly. If one set of plants is hoed or sprayed out, better re-check in two to three weeks -- chances are you'll have another crop.

How does it spread? -- Only by seed. Nutlets stick to vehicle tires, hoofs, fur, wool, hay, or most anything else.

Shape of leaves -- Leaf pairs on opposite sides of the stems composed of about five pairs of small oval leaflets.

Location of leaves -- Scattered along each side of stem and opposite.

Shape and size of seed -- The cluster of five spiny nutlets looks like a star. These nutlets or burs look like a goat's head. There are two sharp pointed spines on each bur that usually point upward when lying on the ground. The seeds are inside the burs.

Other names -- California Puncture Vine -- Goat's Head.

Control -- Keep plant from producing seed by: Chemical sprays such as 2,4-D or soil sterilant. Mechanical means such as pulling, hoeing, or other cultivation methods, or by burning.

Does it look like anything else? Other plants don't look much like this pest. Sometimes you may slow your driving to get a closer look at Knotweed, but puncture vine is lighter green in color and has noticeable yellow flowers and obnoxious burs.