

War on Weeds — Weeds are Everybody's Problem

THE ISSUE: Syrian beancaper

Syrian beancaper (*Zygophyllum fabago*) is a deep-rooted herbaceous perennial native to the Mediterranean area. It invades disturbed areas, roadways, grasslands, and other sites. It can form dense monocultures that outcompete native species. Its presence reduces forage quality because it is unpalatable to livestock.

Syrian beancaper can grow up to 3 feet in height and width. Branched stems extend from a woody crown. Leaves are leathery, thick, hairless, and are composed of two oval shaped leaflets, giving them a y-shape. Flowers are small and compact, with each having five petals. They are white, cream, yellow or copper colored with pinkish veins. Seed pods are oblong, ribbed, have five compartments, and are 1 ½ inches long. Each seed pod compartment contains several seeds. Syrian beancaper reproduces from seed and vegetatively from rhizomes. Seed is dispersed by wind, water, animals and humans. Control of this weed can be very difficult.



Photo courtesy of California Department of Food and Agriculture, CDFA, Bugwood.org

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Options:

- Prevention — Learn to identify this plant. Never transport unknown plant material. **Always plant clean seed!**
- Mechanical — Hand digging or pulling can be effective on small infestations. Remove as much of the roots as possible. Tillage is not recommended because it can reproduce from rhizomes, allowing it to spread.
- Cultural — Establish a healthy stand of beneficial plants that will compete for essential resources.
- Chemical — Glyphosate and Metsulfuron are two herbicide active ingredients that may control this weed. Refer to <https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed> then search “beancaper.” **Always read and follow herbicide label directions!**

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