"B" Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant, but may have limited distribution in some counties

Common bugloss
Anchusa officinalis

Other common names: Common anchusa, alkanet, bee bread, ox's tongue, starflower, common borage, orchanet,

USDA symbol: ANOF
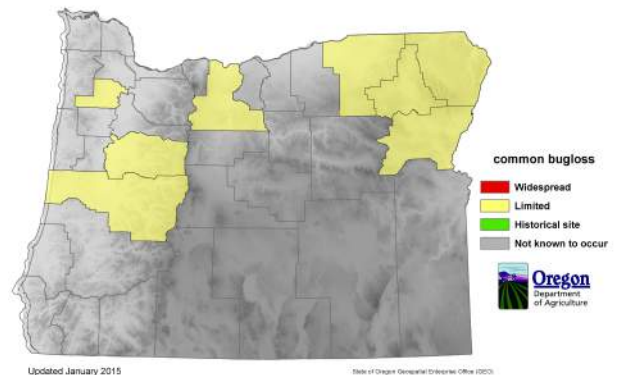**ODA rating:** B and T

Introduction: Common bugloss is native to the Mediterranean region. It was cultivated in medieval gardens and is now naturalized throughout Europe and in much of eastern North America. It's considered invasive in the Pacific Northwest. This herb has numerous medicinal uses as well as its historical use as a dye plant.

Distribution in Oregon: The first report in Oregon was in 1933 from Wallowa County. It continues to be a problem in the Imnaha River Valley and other locations in NE Oregon.

Description: A perennial herb, common bugloss flowers from May to October. It grows one to two feet tall. The stems and leaves are fleshy and coarsely hairy. Basal leaves are lance shaped while upper leaves are progressively smaller up the stem, stalk-less and clasping. It has blue to purple flowers with white throats and five petals. The fiddleneck flower stem uncoils as each bud opens. Its fruit is a four-chambered nutlet and each nutlet contains one seed. One plant can produce an average of 900 seeds, which remain viable for several years. Common bugloss is similar to blueweed, *Echium vulgare* and can be easily confused. The taproot produces a purplish red dye.

Impacts: This plant invades alfalfa fields, pastures, pine forests, rangeland, riparian, and waste areas. The fleshy stalks can cause hay bales to mold. Large, very dense stands can occur, offering strong competition to native plant communities.

Biological controls: No approved biological control agents are available at this time.

common bugloss
- Widespread
- Limited
- Historical site
- Not known to occur

Updated January 2015