Puncturevine

Alias: Tribulus terrestris

Puncturevine an annual, forms a mat 1 to 10 feet in diameter. Introduced from southern Europe, it has spread throughout the United States in waste areas, along roads, and in pastures and fields. The seeds are found in hard, spiny burs that can penetrate skin, bicycle tires, and even sidewalls of auto tires. These spiny burs are harmful to livestock, are objectionable in hay, and reduce the quality of wool fleece. Yellow flower appears from July to October. The spiny bur develops shortly afterwards.

Puncturevine is a noxious weed by the Nevada Administrative Code.

Distinguishing features:

◆ Stems form a mat that can trail out from 1 to 10 feet in diameter.
◆ The compound leaves are small, ¼ to ½ inch, and covered with fine hairs. Each leaf has 4 to 8 pairs of pinnately arranged leaflets.
◆ Small yellow flowers are open during the cool part of the day and are formed where the leaf joins the stem. A five-section fruit follows that breaks apart at maturity into spiny burs containing 2 to 4 seeds.
◆ Puncturevine spreads by seeds that can remain viable in the bur for 4 to 5 years.

This weed crowds out desirable forage and alters the native habitats. It exists throughout the northern and western U.S. and is spreading rapidly to new areas.

Take action:

◆ Report its location to the land owner, gardener, manager or park ranger.
◆ Remove all weed seeds from your clothing, shoes, pets, camping gear, vehicle, and tire treads before moving out of an infested area. Equipment may require steam cleaning before moving to new areas.
◆ Monitor plantings, roadsides, yards, and bare areas. Carefully remove any seeds and dispose of the seeds, shoots, and roots in a sealed garbage bag through the trash. Herbicides may also be available to kill this plant.

Your reward:

A cleaner, healthier environment and the satisfaction that you have helped make the difference!

For more information about controlling this and other invasive weeds, contact:
Nevada Cooperative Extension
775-784-1334;
Nevada Division of Agriculture
Bureau of Plant Industry,
775-688-1180; or
Your local Weed District manager or Conservation District: