



A Northern Arizona Homeowner's Guide To Identifying and Managing **HOREHOUND**

Common name(s): Horehound, white horehound

Scientific name: *Marrubium vulgare*

Family: Mint family (Lamiaceae)

Reasons for concern: This plant forms large, dense monocultures, which have a very negative impact on native vegetation, wildlife, and pollinators. Its dense root system makes it very difficult to eradicate.

Classification: Non-native

Botanical description: Can be upright like small shrub, or creeping. Entire plant has pungent/aromatic odor.

Leaves: Oval to circular. Opposite on stem. Grayish-green. Toothed (jagged) edges, located below flower whorl. Lower surface covered with white woolly hairs. Upper surface wrinkled or puckered. About 1 ½ inches long.

Stem(s): Up to 3 feet tall. Usually erect, 4-sided, with a somewhat woolly base.

Flowers: Tiny to ¼ inch long, white, growing in dense round clusters where leaf meets stem. Tubular. Blooms April through September.

Seeds: Each flower produces 4 dark brown nutlets, each containing one seed.

Roots: Taproot, branched, woody, with numerous fibrous lateral roots.

Native to: Europe

Where it grows: Desert, uplands, mountain, riparian. Along roadsides. Disturbed places. Elevation 2,000 to 8,000 feet.



Horehound habit. Image credit: Patrick Alexander, swbiodiversity.org/seinet

Life cycle: Perennial

Reproduction: From seeds and spreading roots

Weedy characteristics: Can form dense monoculture stands over large areas, reducing native plant diversity. Seeds can remain viable up to 5 years.

Control strategies: Do not let them go to seed. Hand pull or dig out seedlings. Dig out more mature plants with the roots, but be careful not to disturb the soil too much. Step down any loose dirt to prevent seeds from finding a welcome environment to germinate. The roots make it very hard to eradicate. Repeatedly monitor previous infestations for new growth. You may need to consult a professional. Plant desirable native species to outcompete invasives.

Images:



Horehound flower clusters and leaves. Image credit: Bonnie Million, National Park Service, Bugwood.org



Horehound flower clusters and leaves. Image credit: D.C. Thornburg, New York Botanical Garden, swbiodiversity.org/seinet



Horehound flowers. Image credit: Patrick Alexander, swbiodiversity.org/seinet



Horehound nutlets. Image credit: D. Walters and C. Southwick, Table Grape Weed Disseminule ID, USDA APHIS ITP, Bugwood.org

References:

- **White horehound** A WEED REPORT from the book *Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States*
http://wric.ucdavis.edu/information/natural%20areas/wr_M/Marrubium.pdf
- **Marrubium vulgare** Texas invasive plant and pest council
http://www.texasinvasives.org/plant_database/detail.php?symbol=MAVU

<https://nazinvasiveplants.org>

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Economic Development & Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The University of Arizona. The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information and is committed to maintaining an environment free from sexual harassment and retaliation.