



Impatiens glandulifera

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Policeman’s Helmet

Poor Man’s Orchid, Himalayan Balsam

Family: Balsaminaceae

Origins: Native to India and the western Himalayas.

Range: Primarily found along the Pacific Coast, west of the Cascades.

Habitat: Commonly grows in wetlands, riparian areas, gardens, parks, and moist woodlands. Tolerates variable soil types and requires high moisture content. Thrives in partial shade but can also grow in full sun.

Impact: A highly aggressive invader of wetlands, streams, and moist woodlands. Displaces native vegetation, contributes to flooding and erosion by changing or stopping water movement. Policeman’s Helmet reproduces by seed, producing up to 800 seeds per plant, which remain viable for two years. Once the seed capsules are ripe, the seeds are ejected and may land over 20 feet from the plant.

Description: Policeman’s Helmet is an annual plant with shallow roots, growing from 3 to 10 feet tall. Stems are smooth and hollow with a purple to reddish tinge. The leaves are oblong with serrated edges and can be opposite or whorled in groups of three. A gland can be found at the base of the leaves.

The flowers are irregular, 5-parted, and shaped like an English policeman’s helmet. The flowers range in color from white to pink or purple and bloom from mid-June to October.

Common Look-Alikes: Small-Flowered Jewelweed (False Nettle), Spotted Jewelweed.

**Policeman’s Helmet is not known to be toxic.*



Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed’s IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

Non-Herbicide Control

<p>Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)</p>	<p>Hand-pulling small patches is effective but must be repeated until the seed bank has been exhausted. Manually operated cutting tools are very effective on medium to larger patches and can reduce the risk of soil disturbance and erosion. If seeds capsules are present, collect and dispose of them in a sealed bag to reduce spread.</p>
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Cultural	Do not introduce this plant to your landscape. Provide competition by planting native species such as the Spurless Jewelweed.
Biological	Biological agents are currently not available for Policeman's Helmet in Washington State.

Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

Triclopyr +2,4-D¹ (Crossbow, Crossroad)	Timing: Spring when plants are actively growing; summer before flowering. Remarks: Repeat application for two years to control seedlings; avoid drift to sensitive crops; do not apply near water.
Glyphosate¹ (Rodeo, Killzall, Kleenup, Roundup)	Timing: Spring when plants are actively growing; summer before flowering. Remarks: Spray complete, uniform coverage but not to the point of runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; Glyphosate is nonselective and may injure or kill any vegetation it contacts; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Triclopyr Ester / Triclopyr Amine¹ (Garlon 4 / Garlon 3A, Remedy)	Timing: Spring when plants are actively growing; summer before flowering. Remarks: Spray complete uniform coverage; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; consult the label for registered site types; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Metsulfuron ¹ (Escort, MSM)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plants. Remarks: Do not allow spray to drift to sensitive crops; apply only to pasture, rangeland, and non-crop sites; application sites differ between products; for best results, use a surfactant.

* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), nwcb.wa.gov. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels. ¹WSU Kitsap County Extension Policeman's Helmet Factsheet: https://kitsap.wsu.edu/noxious_weed