

# Field horsetail

*Equisetum arvense*

Horsetail Family

## Key identifying traits

- ❑ Plants grows erect 1-2' tall
- ❑ It has a cone bearing stem which pops up in early spring and is a tan to brown color growing 6-12" tall with a cone on the top
- ❑ Plants have whorls of slender green jointed branches
- ❑ Plants have spreading underground rhizomes that produce many shoots and tubers

## Biology and ecology

- A perennial plant spreading by spores and rhizomatous roots
- Scouring rush is a native of the U.S.
- It is considered toxic to livestock, especially horse,s but is usually not eaten by animals
- The plant contains several chemicals which can be used medicinally
- Usually thought of as a wetland plant but we have noticed it growing in drier areas as well

## Control

*Prevention* - Learn to identify plants; start monitoring early in the season

*Biological* - No known biological control in our area

*Cultural* - Plant competitive grass or other cover crops

*Mechanical* - Cultivation does not work as it will grow from the root fragments and rhizomes

*Chemical* - refer to the [PNW Weed Management handbook](#) which lists Telar and MCPA as well as a few other herbicides for the control of field horsetail

*Where found* – Small populations of field horsetail are scattered through Stevens County but not any large dense areas known to be here

Photos: Top Richard Old, XID Services, Inc.; middle Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service, [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org); bottom OR State Univ. Larry Burrell & Jed Colquhoun photo Collection

