

# Redroot pigweed

*Amaranthus retroflexus L.*

Pigweed Family

## Key identifying traits

- ❑ Leaves have prominent veins and are lance shaped, sometimes turning a reddish color
- ❑ Plants grow 2-6' in height
- ❑ Lower stems are normally red or red striped
- ❑ Flowers are small and green and flower clusters are full of stiff spike-like bracts
- ❑ Seeds are small, black and shiny

## Biology and ecology

- An annual plant reproducing by seed
- Redroot pigweed is a very prolific seed producer
- Germination can occur any time during the growing season when there is adequate soil moisture
- Due to the spiny bracts it is undesirable in hay crops
- This plant is a species native to tropical America and now widespread through the U.S.
- Pigweeds can be high in nitrates and toxic to livestock

## Control

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

*Biological* - No known biological control in our area

*Cultural* - Planting a competitive grass or other cover crop

*Mechanical* - Being an annual plant mowing or tillage will work good for control if done before plant flower and produce seed

*Chemical* - There are many herbicides listed for control of pigweeds-products with dicamba such as "Weedmaster" are recommended. Also refer to the [PNW Weed Management handbook](#) for others.

*Where found* - Scattered areas throughout Stevens County and seen quite frequently in abandoned crop fields and gardens



All Photos Richard Old, XID Services, Inc.