

# Smooth scouringrush

*Equisetum laevigatum*

Horsetail Family

## Key identifying traits

- ❑ Plants have deep spreading rootstocks
- ❑ Stems are rough and hollow
- ❑ Stems are also segmented and can be pulled apart easily
- ❑ End of the stems have a spore-producing cone
- ❑ Plants can be from 1-3' tall
- ❑ Leaves are teeth like scales around the joints of the stems

## Biology and ecology

- A perennial plant spreading by rootstocks and spores
- It grows along stream banks as well as in dry soils; also seen along roads and railroad tracks
- Scouringrush is native to the U.S.
- It is toxic to animals, horses in particular, both fresh and dry although usually will not be grazed unless there is a shortage of desirable forage
- Plants contain a high amount of silica which makes it very difficult for herbicides to penetrate

## Control

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

*Biological* - No known biological control

*Cultural* - Plant competitive grass or other cover crop

*Mechanical* - Tillage will break up the rhizomes and may make infestations worse

*Chemical* - the [PNW Weed Management handbook](#) does not list scouringrush for recommendations but it is on the Telar label for control

*Where found* - Scattered areas of plants throughout Stevens County and abandoned crop fields have become almost monocultures of scouringrush

