



High Risk in all
regions of the Okanagan

Limited population with significant
potential to spread in the region

**AKA: Anchusa, alkanet, bee bread,
ox's tongue, starflowers, common borage,
orchanet**

DESCRIPTION

- Biennial or perennial forb
- Tubular flowers that are initially reddish and turn deep purplish blue with white centers
- Leaves are covered with stiff hairs and become smaller towards the top of the plant
- Plants have several stems and grow 30-80 cm tall
- Each flower produces a cluster of 4 barbless nutlets

Common bugloss forms a rosette of oblong leaves in its first year and has a taproot. Multiple flowering stems form from each taproot. Flowering typically occurs from May through July. Common bugloss reproduces by seed; one plant can produce up to 900 seeds which can remain viable in the soil for several years. Seeds can be spread by vehicles, boots, clothing, and pets. Redistribution of soils and gravels and contaminated hay can also spread the seeds.

HABITAT

Common bugloss, originally from Eurasia, thrives in sandy, gravely disturbed areas where vegetation is sparse, such as pastures, hay lands, roads, and trails. Common bugloss occurs only rarely in south-central BC and southern Vancouver Island.

Common Bugloss

Anchusa officinalis



Common Bugloss



Common Bugloss

LOOK-A-LIKE

Common bugloss is often confused with **Blueweed** (*Echium vulgare*)- an introduced species with a similar coloured flower. While both plants are covered in stiff hairs, blueweed hairs have a swollen, coloured base which makes the stem appear spotted, unlike common bugloss.



Blueweed

IMPACT AND RISKS

- Common bugloss invades pastures, hay lands, alfalfa fields, rangelands, and riparian areas, and can reduce yield and carrying capacity.
- Common bugloss can spoil alfalfa hay because the succulent leaves and stems become moldy; however this is not a problem for cultivated crops.
- Common bugloss can form dense monocultures that outcompete native plants.

PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

The most effective way to ensure that your lands do not become infested with common bugloss is by prevention. Here are some recommendations to prevent common bugloss from invading your property:

- Maintain your crops and natural lands in a healthy, vigorous condition to ensure a competitive plant community.
- Regularly patrol your property for common bugloss plants and immediately control or remove infestations before seed set. Do not leave plants to compost as they may still produce viable seed.
- Cooperate with adjacent landowners and encourage them to prevent common bugloss spread.
- Immediately re-vegetate disturbed, bare soils with a suitable seed mixture that provides dense, early colonization to prevent weed invasion.
- Do not move contaminated soils to a new area.
- Clean equipment, vehicles, and footwear before leaving an infested area.

TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL

- Woody taproots make common bugloss difficult to remove manually. Small infestations can be dug out, removing as much of the root as possible. Cutting or mowing can be done before plants flower to prevent seed production.
- All plants and plant parts should be bagged, removed from the site, and burned or taken to the landfill.
- Disturbed sites should be monitored for new outbreaks.
- If applying herbicides, read the label for full use and precautionary instructions. For further information on the selection and application of chemicals to protect your crop, contact AgriService BC at 1-888-221-7141 or email AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca



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