



PARKS AND
RECREATION

Adopt the Greenbelt News

A newsletter for participants of the Adopt the Greenbelt program.

October, 2020

Dear Volunteer,

We want to hear from you! Do you have stories, photos, or Greenbelt experiences that you would be willing to share with others in the Adopt the Greenbelt program? If so, please send them to kgnojewski@cityofboise.org. We want to highlight some of the great work you are doing across the city. Thank you for all you do to keep the Boise River Greenbelt healthy and vibrant for people and wildlife.

FOCUS ON NATIVE PLANTS - Wood's Rose

One of the most common plants along the Boise River corridor is Wood's Rose (*Rosa Woodsii*). A native shrub, Wood's rose grows to be 5 to 10 feet in height and provides nectar, fruit and shelter for wildlife. The five-petaled blooms range in color from light to dark pink and appear in late spring through early summer. By late summer the blossoms give way to bright red-orange rose hips that provide



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food for birds and small mammals throughout the winter months. Rose hips which are rich in vitamin C, were also eaten by Native Americans and are still used for a variety of culinary purposes. Wood's rose stems host narrow straight prickles (thorns) which can be used to distinguish it from Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*), a non-native climbing species which has large, down-curved thorns. The dense, rhizomatous root structure of Wood's rose play an important roll in stabilizing soil and preventing erosion in riparian areas.



NOXIOUS SPECIES SPOTLIGHT - Houndstongue

Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) is a biennial plant that produces stalks of deep reddish-purple flowers during its' second year of growth. The leaves are lance shaped, rough, and hairy. Mature plants can reach up to four feet in height with each flower producing four seed containing nutlets.



The nutlets are covered with a Velcro like material that facilitates seed dispersal by adhering to fur, feathers and clothing. The seeds are relatively short lived (less than five years) in the soil, so once the seed source is removed the population can be reduced in a relatively short period of time. Houndstongue can be mechanically controlled by digging the taproot. To avoid resprouting, it is essential to remove as much as the taproot as possible. As with handling any noxious weeds, gloves should be worn during removal and plants should be properly disposed of in the trash. If you think that you may have found houndstongue in your adopted section, feel free to send a photo for verification. We truly appreciate your help controlling this and other noxious plants along the Greenbelt.



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Northern Flicker

If you have ever noticed a woodpecker on the ground picking at insects in the sidewalk, you have likely encountered a Northern flicker. A medium-sized, woodpecker, flickers nest in a cavity in a dead or dying tree. They may excavate a new cavity, or reuse an existing one. Flickers are primarily insect eaters and are often observed on the ground near sources of ants or beetles. In the winter, they forage on berries and seeds. Flickers are mostly brown, with black accents on their chests and backs. Males have red mustache-like markings extending down from the edge of their cheeks. The undersides of the tail and wing feathers of both sexes are reddish. Next time you are out, keep your eyes and ears open for this striking bird.