

Shiny Geranium

Geranium lucidum

Description: Shiny Geranium grows predominantly as an annual weed in the Pacific Northwest where it tolerates either sun or shade and grows up to 10 to 12 inches high, though it may become biennial depending on moisture conditions. The stems are usually tinged bright red. Round leaves are deeply lobed, averaging 1½ inches across, very waxy and shiny, bright green, turning vivid red in summer and fall. Five petaled pink flowers are found growing in pairs at the ends of stalks at the same height or in amongst the leaves. Seedlings sprout with the advent of the first substantial fall rains. The plants continue to grow through fall and winter, forming large patches that begin to bloom in April and May.



Photo by Bruce Newhouse

Impacts: Shiny Geranium establishes quickly, utilizing the abundance of early spring moisture, then dominates the site by pushing out many other early season wildflowers and seedlings of perennial plants. As soils dry, few other plants are able to establish through the mats of receding biomass. When seed capsules are dry, they can burst open, forcefully ejecting seeds in all directions, including upwind or steep terrain, allowing infestations to penetrate otherwise undisturbed natural areas. It is also believed that this species is capable of producing multiple generations per year when moisture conditions are favorable.

Control Options: Thurston County's Integrated Pest Management emphasizes cultural, biological, and manual control methods to keep pests and vegetation problems low enough to prevent damage. The goal of Thurston County's pesticide use policy is to minimize the use of pesticides by utilizing and providing information about the most effective control options that are available and practical.



► Cultural / Habitat

Don't bring plants home from infested wooded areas, as there may be dormant seeds in any soil around the roots. Wash down boots and shoes, tools, vehicles and pets after visiting parks, forests or other areas where there are populations of Shiny Geranium. Keep plants out of compost piles, including plants that have been weeded out, as there may be seed in the soil, or stuck to the plants. Heavy layers of mulch may be some help in preventing plants from germinating. Successful plans for controlling Shiny Geranium must include monitoring and follow-up control efforts throughout the spring, summer and fall. Monitoring and follow-up treatments must be repeated in subsequent years until the seed bank is exhausted.

► Manual / Mechanical

Small populations or isolated plants can be hand-weeded if the soil is loose and allows roots to be removed easily. Hoeing or cultivating will also work if plants are removed after loosening. Disturbing the soil through manual or mechanical control may cause a flush of seedlings to emerge, exacerbating the problem, especially in larger infestations.

► Biological

There are currently no biological control methods available for controlling Shiny Geranium.

► **Chemical**

Because Shiny Geranium is a low-growing plant that often grows among desirable vegetation, applications of herbicide should be used only where there are large numbers of plants, or in soil conditions that make manual control difficult. Spot spraying herbicide containing the active ingredient **glyphosate** (example: Roundup Pro®, Glyphos®, etc.) is effective in controlling Shiny Geranium.

Thurston County has observed that most ready-to-use, pre-mixed products do not contain sufficient active ingredients to be as effective as concentrated products that are then mixed with water to create a specific finished concentration. The following instructions are for products containing 41% glyphosate which will be mixed down to a specified dilution rate. Be sure to read your label carefully, and make adjustments to rates accordingly.

Foliar applications of glyphosate (ROUNDUP PRO™):

- Using a spot application, spray the leaves of the plants thoroughly, enough to be wet but not dripping.
- Spot application means the herbicide is applied only to the plants and not on the surrounding plants or soil.
- Glyphosate is non-selective and will injure or kill any plants that it comes in contact with, including grass.
- Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.

The Roundup Pro® label recommends a 0.5–2% solution for hand-held or spot applications for control of annual weeds, the rate depending on size, species and conditions. Because Shiny Geranium is often found at several plant stages in one location, the higher concentration (2%) is the most effective. Spray-



To 1 gallon of water add:	2.66 oz. Roundup Pro® containing 41% glyphosate (for a 2% product spray solution)
1 fluid ounce = 2 Tablespoon	

ing with a lower percentage solution may not kill the plants, which can contribute to herbicide resistance. **Timing:** Spot applications can be made any time that plants are actively growing, from early spring to late fall. Best to treat before seed capsules mature and produce seed.

READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL DIRECTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS. Use of brand names does not imply endorsement and is for reference only; other formulations of the same herbicides may be available under other names. Information provided is current as of the date of the fact sheet. Pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.



Photo by Bruce Newhouse

REFERENCES:

Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/written_findings/CLASS%20A%20PDFs/Draft%20Geranium%20lucidum%20Written%20Findings.pdf

Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Division Noxious Weed Control: http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile_shinygeranium.shtml

Western Invasives Network Fact Sheet: http://www.westerninvasivesnetwork.org/pdfs/nature_conserve/portland/Fact%20Sheets/Shining%20Geranium_camassia.pdf



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