



Whatcom Weeds

Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board 901 W. Smith Road Bellingham WA 98226
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CLARY SAGE

Salvia sclarea

THREAT: Clary sage, a native to Eurasia, has been introduced to North America as a garden ornamental and medicinal plant. An essential oil, used in perfumes and flavoring, is derived from the inflorescence. Clary sage invades meadows, rangelands and other disturbed areas and spreads by seed. Clary sage is on the Washington State quarantine list, making it illegal to buy, sell or transport clary sage plants or seeds in this state. It is also a Class A noxious weed, making it the responsibility of landowners to eradicate any plants from their properties.

DESCRIPTION: Clary sage is an erect biennial (sometimes perennial), strong-smelling herb in the mint family. During its first year, a rosette of basal leaves form from a taproot. The flowering stalks, which grow 2 to 6 feet tall, are produced in the second year. The plant has many branching square stems, and is covered with gland-tipped hairs. The large leaves are triangular to ovate, with teeth on the margins. The flowers can be white, pink, blue or purple, and are arranged in whorls around the stem. Each cluster of flowers has a large white to pale green bract below the cluster. Clary sage flowers from late spring to mid-summer.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS: Clary sage can be controlled through mechanical and chemical means. For small infestations, hand digging is effective, as long as most of the taproot is removed. Contact the weed control board for site-specific chemical recommendations.

