Rush Skeletonweed

Chondrilla juncea

- Perennial
- Deep tap root
- Tolerates drought and many soil types
- Plants contain milky substance inside stems
- Individual plants can produce 20,000 seeds.
- Root fragments can generate new plants

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Suggested Control Methods for Rush Skeletonweed

Chemical Control (Most Effective)

Timing: Best applied in spring when plants are in the rosette stage or in the fall for fall rosettes, as it is hard to control after bolting.

Herbicides: Effective options include Aminopyralid, Clopyralid, 2,4-D, Picloram, and combinations like Clopyralid + Dicamba.

Biological Control

Agents: Skeletonweed gall midge (Cytiphora chmidti) and gall mite (Eriophyes chondrillae) are established and effective at reducing density, especially with herbicide use.

Rust Fungus: Puccinia chondrillina is another agent, though research shows mixed results.

Mechanical & Manual Control

Hand-Pulling/Digging: Effective for small, new infestations when soil is moist; must remove the entire root system and bag carefully to prevent seed spread.

Mowing/Cutting: Repeated mowing can suppress growth and seed production but will not eradicate it due to deep roots.

Avoid Cultivation/Tilling: This is counterproductive, as it fragments roots and spreads the plant, increasing the infestation.

Grazing

Sheep & Goats: Moderate, continuous grazing can reduce seed and rosette formation but avoid peak flowering/seeding to prevent damage to desirable plants.

Integrated Strategy

Best Approach: Combine methods; for example, use biocontrol agents and herbicides for effective management, and plant competitive native species to outcompete the weed.