



Saltlover

Halogeton glomeratus (Aka halogeton, barila)

Provincial Designation:
Prohibited Noxious



Clinton Shock, oregon State University, Bugwood.org



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Overview:

Saltlover is a summer or winter annual, succulent herb native to Eurasia. It arrived in the U.S. in the early 1900's, possibly for use in grazing experiments.³ Since that time it has spread throughout the desert areas. It is not a strong competitor but can quickly invade disturbed or overgrazed saline-alkaline sites. It grows quickly, taking advantage of infrequent precipitation.³

Flowering begins early summer and seed production continues until frost. Saltlover reproduces exclusively by seed and can produce thirty-five seeds per cm of stem – more than 100,000 seeds can be produced by a single plant. It produces two types of seed; black seeds germinate the first growing season after production, and brown seeds can remain viable but dormant for ten years or more.³ Late germinating and maturing plants produce only black seeds.¹

Saltlover seeds have high viability after passing through the digestive tracts of sheep and rabbits.¹ Plants are poisonous to livestock – high concentrations of oxalates accumulate

in plant tissue as a response to the excessive uptake of sodium ions. There is no treatment once an animal has been poisoned.¹

Habitat:

Saltlover is adapted to alkaline soils and semi-arid environments. It can grow on heavy clay, clay loams, and sandy/loamy soils, usually saline sites, with a soil pH of 8.0 to 9.0¹

Identification:

Stems: Are lateral, decumbent spreading from the base, 10-40 cm long, and the main terminal stem is erect.¹ There is a high degree of branching² and stems often turn pink or red.³

Leaves: Are linear, fleshy and 4-17 mm long. Leaf tips are bluntly rounded and bear a soft, slender spine. Foliage is a bluish-green turning yellow, reddish, or purplish by fall.³

Flowers: The two types of flowers are inconspicuous and appear in leaf axils. Flowers have only sepals and no petals.³ Seeds

are black 0.5-1 mm or brown 1-2 mm long.¹

Prevention:

Saltlover seeds can be spread by animal feces, road graders, harvester ants, and water. Cured plants will break off at ground level and tumble with the wind.¹ Overgrazing of dry, alkaline habitats renders them susceptible to invasion. Controlling extensive infestations will require elimination of the disturbance that facilitated saltlover invasion.³

Control:

Grazing: Saltlover is generally unpalatable to livestock.¹ Signs of poisoning; depression, weakness, shallow breathing, drooling, coma, and death two hours to several days after ingestion.³ Invasive plants should never be considered as forage.

Mechanical: Tillage and hand pulling are easily done and is effective control. It should be done while plants are young to avoid spreading seed. Control efforts will need to be repeated through the growing season and for many successive years. Mowing can re-

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duce seed production, but will miss most of the stems. Fire is not an effective control method but dried plants aid fire spread and become flying firebrands. Burned areas are an ideal seedbed for saltlover.

Chemical: Currently no selective herbicides are registered for use on saltlover. Always check product labels to ensure the herbicide is registered for use on the target plant in Canada by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency. Always read and follow label directions. Consult your local Agricultural Fieldman or Certified Pesticide Dispenser for more information.

Biological: Possible agents have been identified in Central Asia, but have not yet been further researched.³



Richard Old, XID Services, Inc., Bugwood.org



Utah State University



Clinton Shock, oregon State University, Bugwood.org



Steve Hurst, USDA NRCS PLANTS Database, Bugwood.org

REFERENCES

- 1 Pavek, Diane S. 1992. *Halogeton glomeratus*. In: Fire Effects Information System, (Online). USDA, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Sciences Laboratory. www.fs.fed.us/database/feis
- 2 *Halogeton glomeratus* in *Flora of North America*. www.efloras.org
- 3 *Halogeton glomeratus*. Invasive Plants of California's Wildland. California Invasive Plant Council. www.cal-ipc.org/ip/mamangement/ipcw