

# GRAY RABBITBRUSH

(ERICAMERIA NAUSEOSA)

## Background/ Description

Gray rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*) is a warm-season perennial native to North America. It prefers dry, open areas on plains, valley bottoms, foothills, and mountains. This shrub grows 1 to 8 feet tall and has a rounded crown with stems originating from its base. Tiny hairs cover the stems and leaves of the plant. The leaves are alternate, linear to spatula-shaped, within the entire margins. Rubber rabbitbrush produces flowers from late July to October. These flowers are yellow, tubular and are arranged in terminal, rounded clusters. Seeds are created after flowering and are dispersed through wind, water, humans, birds, and rodents. These seeds can be viable in the soil for up to 3 years and germinate at various temperatures. Rubber rabbitbrush primarily reproduces through seed but can produce through epicormic buds.



Picture Courtesy of Emilio Carrillo, Rangeland Management Specialist, Tucson, AZ

## Biological Control

Two species exist a leaf beetle (*Trirhabda nitidicollis*) and a gall-forming fly (*Aciurina bigeloviae*). They are both currently under research as biological control agents but have not been approved by the USDA.

## Mechanical Control

Hand removal can be an effective control for younger species. Older species may be challenging as the entire plant, and root system must be removed. Mowing can work to suppress top growth but will not control the species.

## Cultural Control

Burning can reduce top growth but is not recommended, as this can stimulate growth to the intact root system and cause more significant infestations. Grazing is not suggested as this is not a palatable choice for many animals and does not support many grazing animals' nutritional needs.

## Chemical Control

When using a rubber rabbitbrush chemical application, considering the plant's health condition can be crucial to control success. Plants under drought or stress will not absorb herbicide treatments as those in ideal situations. Because of its deep roots, management is harder to achieve. Several applications may be necessary before desired results are attained. Using a systemic herbicide will help control all parts of the plant.

\*Precaution should be used when using any herbicide treatment. Follow and read the label for safety and instructions best results. The label is the law!



Picture Courtesy of Emilio Carrillo, Rangeland Management Specialist, Tucson, AZ

HERBICIDE	RATE PER ACRE	APPLICATION TIMING/ NOTES
Lo Vol Ester (2,4-D Ester formulation)	32 to 64 oz.	Suppresses growth. Apply in the summer to fall. Avoid spraying in weather conditions above 80°.
Milestone (Aminopyralid)	7 oz.	Best results with treatments made in the fall. Generally safe in most grasses but other broad leaf species may be susceptible the herbicide.
Arsenal (Imazapyr)	64 oz.	Apply during active growth periods. An adjuvant is recommended with this application.
*Tordon 22k (Picloram)	16 to 32 oz.	Apply later in the season, post-flower stage. Selective and may affect many

\* Use the suggested rate of picloram in the table. Picloram is a Restricted Use herbicide and requires a certified pesticide applicator to make applications.

### References

United States Department of Agriculture. (2017). Field Guide for Managing Rabbitbrush in the Southwest [Fact Sheet]. U.S. Forest Service. [https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd563029.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd563029.pdf)

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