

# Weed Information Sheet:

## gray dogwood

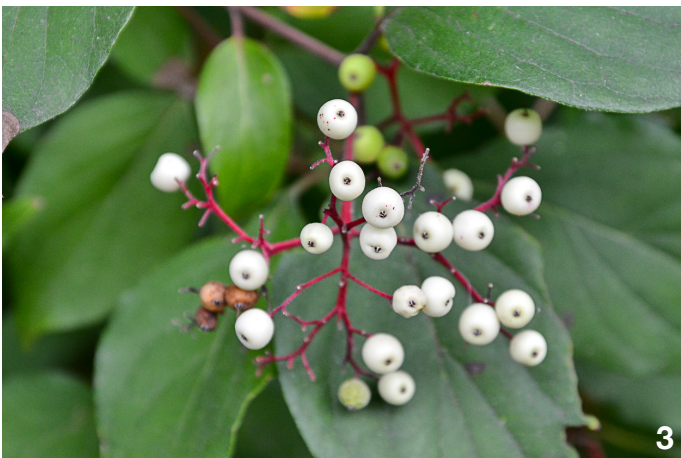
*Cornus racemosa*

### Identification:

**Cornaceae (Dogwood Family)**

**Common** Perennial shrub, deciduous **Height:** 6-12' **Width:** 5-8' **Leaf Arrangement:** opposite  
**Flower:** White **Blooms:** Early summer to Mid-summer **Fruit:** Drupe **Fall Color:** Red, Green

Gray dogwood grows up to 5 feet tall but can reach closer to 8 feet in full sun, open conditions. Leaves are ovate to lanceolate, gray-green with lateral veins and oppositely arranged on slender branches. This clonal shrub blooms from May to June with displays of domed, white flower clusters that give way to white fruits on showy, red stalks. Stems tend to have more upright, erect structure unless growing in dense colonies, where they revert to more of a broad, domed shape.



## gray dogwood

*Cornus racemosa*

**AKA:** *Cornus foemina* subsp. *racemosa*, grey dogwood



### Description & Impact:

Grey dogwood is one of Wisconsin's native shrubs that can become overly aggressive in some habitats. This species will grow on variety of different soil types and tolerates full sun to partial shade, but can produce massive clones in mesic prairie settings within a few years if left unchecked. Also found abundantly along untended hedgerows, abandoned fields, old fence-lines and open woodlands. Dogwood shrubs are excellent sources of cover and food for songbirds. Deer and other wildlife also access the berries, leaves and twigs for food. It can also be a good screening shrub in a landscaping setting. Due to the wildlife value, this shrub is best suited along edges of larger prairie tracts with an intact management regime that can accommodate and isolate the colony spread.

### Control Methods:

**Mechanical:** Repeated mowing, multiple times per growing season as the plants resprout can weaken the colony significantly, but will not kill it outright. A regular prescribed fire regime can help control small colonies, but they will readily resprout from the roots.

**Fire:** Prescribed fire can help keep the impacts of gray dogwood in prairies at a minimum. Fire will not kill grey dogwood, but it will kill the stems and force them to resprout from the roots. That said, if a colony of dogwood is large and/or dense, fire is not likely to penetrate. Cutting is usually required as a first step to remove well-established dogwood colonies

**Herbicide:** Glyphosate (Round-Up®, etc.) can be applied as a foliar spray (with August being a good time), however this will leave dead-standing stems and risk over-spray on neighboring plants.

Cutting and removing the brush is often desirable. After cutting each stem as close to the ground as is practical, treat the stump with concentrated herbicide. We recommend a 20-40% solution of glyphosate in water during the summer and fall. In winter or early-spring a 12.5% solution of triclopyr (Garlon® 4, etc.) may be more effective, but has a higher potential to kill neighboring plants. It is best to apply the herbicide to the cut stumps immediately so as not to lose track of them.

You can also use triclopyr for basal bark treatment. Use a hand-sprayer, or sponge, paint brush or paint roller to applying herbicide completely around the stem in a strip 8-12" tall. For stems less than 1/2" in diameter applying the herbicide to just one side of the stem should be sufficient.

Always read herbicide labels carefully before use and apply according to the instruction on the product label.

### Citations: