

Tool for Digging Knapweed

This tool was made for me over 20 years ago by an old man who said he used to use it to dig Seneca root in North Saskatchewan. It has been an almost constant companion to me ever since.



I have found only one plant (trees and bushes don't count) that defeats it: second year burdock. Perennial knapweed has to be dug all around but eventually this tool will take it out (I have broken two garden forks on perennial knapweed). I wield it either standing, or kneeling on the ground and ramming it in with my hands.

It is made of a 20" leaf spring (rather rare these days) mounted on a 36" pole. The bottom 5" of the spring hangs below the pole. 15" along the lower end of the pole has been flattened (leaving a little notch where the flattening ends) so the spring can be snugged next to the wood and held in place.

As shown in the picture, near the bottom a bolt holds the spring to the pole; a little above, a bolt through

the wood only provides a foot peg. Higher up the spring, a strip of metal around pole and spring is bolted tightly as a clamp.

Except for something with a large crown like perennial knapweed, plants can be levered out root and all with moderate effort and the divot stomped back in place. Even if you find something too hard for it, you won't break it.

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Note: the Lee Valley Dandelion Digger is a similar tool and can be seen at www.leevalley.com - CKIPC