

Mountain Misery (Bear Clover)

Mountain Misery was named because of the sticky resin on all parts of the plant and its strong medicinal odor. The plant has fernlike leaves and gets tiny white flowers with egg-yolk-colored centers. Also called bear mat, the underground stems form a tangled mat of vegetation. It grows close to the ground and doesn't exceed 2 feet tall; however, its root system may measure 82 feet long. The spread potential of even a small amount of bear mat is extreme; thus the plant requires careful monitoring and control. In mid to late summer this plant's resin becomes an extreme fire hazard.

Mountain Misery grows in regions with mild, wet winters and hot summers. The plant can easily survive in moist or dry areas and has a wide tolerance for different soils. It prefers an acidic to partially acidic medium. Mountain misery is an understory plant found in open story forests. It is often found in Ponderosa Pine forests and mixed coniferous forests. It is found in mountainous and alpine terrain as well as mountain valleys.

Hoeing and hand pulling of mountain misery have little effect because you cannot get all the root systems. Just a small piece of root left in the ground is enough to reestablish a stand of the plant. There are many chemical herbicides which are effective against bear mat. Most of them carry a high toxicity level and are not appropriate for use in the home landscape where children and [pets](#) play. Any herbicide with Dicamba or Triclopyr as the main ingredient can give adequate control. Apply the herbicide in spring or early summer, and apply repeat treatments.

"Roundup" has also proven effective for many people and is safe for people and pets if applied per the manufacturer's directions. The visible growth and as much of the root system as possible should be removed. When the bear mat begins growing again the spray should be applied. This has the effect of being drawn into the root system and, in most situations, should kill the plant.

For more information, go to: [More On Mountain Misery](#)