

Scotch Thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*)

• Plant characteristics:

- **Stem:** Up to 12 ft. tall and branched, with spiny wings along smooth stem; covered with wooly, gray hair
- **Leaves:** Alternate, oblong, 4-20 in. long, covered with wooly gray hairs giving plant a gray-green appearance; edges are lobed or toothed with stiff spines
- **Flower:** White to purple flowers, each located at the tip of a branch; base of flower is round, 1-2 in. wide and covered with green, purple, or yellow bracts, each tipped with a spine; often covered with wooly gray hairs
- **Root:** Fleshy taproot
- **Other:** Often infests pastures, roadsides, and waste areas
 - Biennial; reproduces by seed
 - Forms dense stands that are difficult for humans and animals to penetrate



• Mechanical Control:

- Small newly infested areas can be effectively controlled with digging. When digging be sure to sever the root below the soil surface.
- Mowing in the late bolting or bud stage can reduce seed production. However, mowing too early will only delay flowering. Because eradication requires the plant to be cut below the surface with all leaves removed, mowing is not a satisfactory control method.

***Be sure to dispose of mature flower heads because they will likely be carrying viable seeds.**

• Chemical Control:

- Apply **2,4-D** postemergence from rosette to beginning of bolting or fall rosette. Most effective on small rosettes.
- Apply **Aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron** postemergence and preemergence. Postemergence application are most effective when applied to plants from the seedling to the bolting stage.
- Apply **Aminopyralid** postemergence from the rosette to young bolting stage.
- Apply **Clopyralid** postemergence from the rosette to young bolting stage. Results are best when applied to rapidly growing weeds.
- Apply **Clopyralid +2,4-D** postemergence from the rosette to young bolting stage. Results are best when applied to rapidly growing weeds.
- Apply **Dicamba** postemergence from rosette to beginning of bolting or fall rosette.
- Apply **Picloram** preemergence and postemergence. With postemergence application, best time is rosette to early bolting stage, when plants are growing rapidly.
- Apply **Glyphosate** postemergence to rapidly growing plants from the rosette to early bolting stage.
- Apply **Chlorsulfuron** postemergence from the rosette to flower bud stage.
- Apply **Metsulfuron** postemergence from the rosette up until flower-bud stage.

***The NDA cannot recommend specific herbicide brand names. An internet search of the chemical name (active ingredient) will show available products. Please contact me at (773) 353-3673 or jdick@agri.nv.gov if you need further assistance.**