

Plant: Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*)

Identification: Scotch thistle is an extremely invasive biennial weed that once established, can be very difficult to get rid of. The first year they form a rosette that can be up to 2 feet across. At maturity the plants can get up to 8 feet tall. Scotch thistle are generally a light green color, with wide, broad oval shaped leaves. They have egg sized purple and occasionally white flower heads. Scotch thistle reproduce by seed, and each plant can produce 8,500 to 40,000 seeds. Studies have shown seeds can stay viable in the ground for up to 20 years. You can find scotch thistle in just about any habitat.

Defense: Mechanical control can be very effective on scotch thistle such as cutting with a shovel. Just be sure to get at least 4 inches of the root so the plant cannot start growing again. Herbicides such as Aminopyralid (Milestone), Redeem R & P (clopyralid + triclopyr), and Tordon (a restricted use product) work well. Always be sure to use a surfactant when applying herbicides due to the hairy leaves on this plant. If detected quick response is necessary to controlling this weed. If they go to seed, you will be dealing with the seed bed for many years.

**Always read and understand the pesticide label and restrictions on any pesticide you are using.
The label is the law.**

