



Slenderflower Thistle

Scientific Name:	<i>Carduus tenuiflorus</i>
Year Listed:	1991
Weed Class:	A
Requirement:	Eradication
Other Names:	Winged Plumeless Thistle
Native To:	N. Africa and S. Europe
Toxicity:	Not known to be

Why is it a noxious weed?

Slenderflower Thistle invades range lands and pastures, outcompeting desirable forage plants and native plant species by forming dense stands.

How would I identify it?

General Description

Stems grow up to 6 feet and are unbranched to branched. Plants are covered in loose, woolly hairs. It germinates in the fall and overwinters as a rosette (a radiating cluster of leaves), producing flowering stalks in late spring.

Flower Description

Flowerheads are clustered in groups of 5 to 20+ at branch tips. Flowers are pinkish, 0.4 to 0.6 inches long. Outer bracts at the base of flower head with 1 to 2 mm long spine tips and inner bracts without spines.

Leaf Description

Leaves at stem base are generally 4 to 10 inches long. They have 6 to 10 spine-tipped lobes and tapered leaf bases forming winged leaf stalks. Leaves are often covered with loose woolly hairs. Stem leaves are smaller, stalkless.

Stem Description

Stems have large spiny wings that form from leaf bases that run down stems.

Fruit/Seed Description

Seed within a dry covering, with bristles on the top end. It is 4 to 5 mm long.



May Be Confused With:

Italian Thistle, *Carduus pycnocephalus*, is similar but generally has fewer flower-heads (1-5) than Slenderflower Thistle (5-20).

Italian Thistle is also a Class A Weed.

Where does it grow?

Slenderflower Thistle grows in open areas such as pastures, ranges, rights-of-way and areas of disturbance.

How does it reproduce?

Slenderflower Thistle reproduces by seed.

How do I control Slenderflower Thistle?

The most effective way to manage weed infestations is to research, plan for, and use a combination of prevention and control methods specific to the problem weed. This approach is called **I**ntegrated **W**eed **M**anagement (IWM), which uses mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical control methods that effectively treat the problem weed yet protect human health, habitat, water, and other natural resources.

IWM Control Method	Effectiveness of Control Method			Timing and Notes **
	Good	Fair	Poor	
Digging	G			Practical for small infestations. Place in garbage bag. Do not compost.
Hand-Pulling	G			Practical for small patches in spring. Wear thick leather gloves! Grab stem at ground level. Bag plants, place in the garbage. Do not compost.
Mowing			P	Class 'A' weeds require eradication; mowing will not eradicate.
Tilling	G			Till in the spring before seeds mature. May need to till several times.
Bark Mulch			P	Not effective as a sole control method, but will reduce germination.
Black Plastic	G			
Cover Crop		F		Not effective as a sole control method, but can be after first applying herbicide or tilling.
Native Plant Restoration		F		Not effective as a sole control method.
Managed Grazing			P	Class 'A' weeds require eradication; grazing will not eradicate.
Weed-Feeding Insects				None.
Herbicides - (Examples*)		<i>Timing is Important! For most effective control, apply herbicides before plants bloom.</i>		
Aminopyralid	Milestone	G		Foliar spray in spring, usually early May. Since Slenderflower Thistle can germinate and mature throughout the spring, a follow-up survey and treatment will be necessary.
Glyphosate	Roundup		F	Effective, but glyphosate will also kill pasture grass.
Triclopyr	Garlon; Vastlan		F	Foliar spray in spring, usually early May. Since Slenderflower Thistle can germinate and mature throughout the spring, a follow-up survey and treatment will be necessary.

*Brand names are listed as examples only. Other products may contain the listed chemical. Clark County does not endorse any product or brand name. *Always read and follow the herbicide label.*

****Timing of control is critical!** Herbicide treatments are often not effective or appropriate when plants are in flower. If the weeds have produced seed, bag the plants and place in garbage, not compost. Regardless of control method chosen, multiple treatments may be needed each year. For more information on IWM, specific herbicides, and timing of control, please contact the Weed Board at:



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