



Fact Sheet 99-14

WANTED— Dead, Not Alive!

This outlaw weed is hiding out! Find it. Eradicate it.

Canada Thistle

Alias: *Cirsium arvense*

This thistle is a perennial capable of forming colonies from numerous horizontal roots. It can be difficult to control because breaking these roots by discing or plowing increases the number of plants. Canada thistle was introduced as a seed contaminant from Eurasia in the late 1700s and has spread throughout North America. Male and female flowers form on separate plants, but by producing colonies of male and female plants asexually, Canada thistle can still spread without fertilization. This plant is listed as a noxious weed by Nevada Administrative Code.

Distinguishing features:

- ◆ Ridged stems typically grow 1 to 4 feet tall.
- ◆ Leaves are irregularly lobed with spines at each lobe tip.
- ◆ Purple to light pink flowers appear in July and August, forming clusters at the branch ends. The individual, erect flower heads are up to ¾ inch across and have spineless bracts.
- ◆ The flat, brown seeds have tufts of hair on the top.



This weed crowds out desirable forage and alters the native habitats. It exists throughout the northern and western U.S. and is spreading rapidly to new areas.

Take action:

- ◆ Report its location to the land owner, gardener, manager or park ranger.
- ◆ Avoid walking on, driving on, or camping in infested areas.
- ◆ Remove all weed seeds from your clothing, shoes, pets, camping gear, vehicle, and tire treads before moving out of an infested area. Equipment may require steam cleaning before moving to new areas.
- ◆ Monitor xeriscaped plantings, roadsides, and dry, bare areas. Carefully remove any seeds and dig up the plant. Dispose of the seeds, shoots, and roots, in a sealed garbage bag through the trash. Herbicides may also be available to kill this plant.

Your reward:

A cleaner, healthier environment and the satisfaction that you have helped make the difference!

For more information about controlling this and other invasive weeds, contact:

Nevada Cooperative Extension
775-784-1334;
Nevada Division of Agriculture
Bureau of Plant Industry,
775-688-1180; or

Your local Weed District manager or Conservation District: