



Fact Sheet 98-75

# WANTED— Dead, Not Alive!

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

## Scotch Thistle

Alias: *Onopordum acanthium*

**S**cotch thistle is a naturalized plant from Europe and eastern Asia that is aggressive, often forming dense stands impenetrable to people, wildlife, and livestock. In Nevada, it grows along roadsides, fencelines, ditchbanks, open dry areas, and in pastures. It is rarely found in gardens and areas cultivated yearly. This thistle is a biennial that grows leaves in a rosette the first year. The stalk, more leaves, flowers, and seeds appear the second year. Scotch thistle is listed as a noxious weed by Nevada Administrative Code.



*Do not let this attractive perennial fool you! It impedes water flow, crowds out native vegetation, and destroys wildlife habitat!*

### Distinguishing features:

- ◆ Grows up to 8 feet tall.
- ◆ During the first year, a rosette forms which can have leaves 2 feet long and 1 foot wide.
- ◆ Second year leaves are large, hairy, coarsely lobed, and have a velvet-grey appearance. They are spiny-edged and form leaf wings around the stalk.
- ◆ Flowers are globe shaped, upright, spiny, and purple to violet in color. They are borne singly on branch tips, but there are many branches.

### 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.
- ◆ Mechanically remove the thistle. Herbicides may also be available that effectively control the thistles in the rosette stage.

### 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: