

# Scotch Thistle

## Category 2: Eradicate

Limited distribution. High priority for reporting and eradication.

*Onopordum acanthium*

**Family:** Asteraceae (Sunflower).

**Other Common Names:** Cotton thistle, winged thistle, heraldic thistle, woolly thistle.

**Origin:** Eurasia.

**Growth Form/Reproduction:** Biennial or perennial. Seeds.

**Identification:** Leaves are alternate, very large, and irregularly lobed, and have sharp yellow spikes. Rosette leaves may be up to 60 cm long and 30 cm wide. Upper and lower leaf surfaces are covered with a thick mat of cotton-like or woolly hairs giving the plant a grey-green colour. Stems are branched and have broad, spiny wings and woolly hairs.

**Legal Status Central Kootenay:** None.

**Habitat:** Best adapted to moist, open habitats. Tolerates dry soils and partial shade. Disturbed sites at low-elevations. Disturbed sites, roadsides, pastures, over-grazed grassland, irrigation ditches, and cultivated fields.

**Status and Distribution:** Very limited distribution; known from single sites at Nelson, Castlegar, Rossland and in the Slocan valley. Found in Syringa Park in 2005. Hand-pulled at two locations in the Pend d'Oreille in the mid-1990s and on one site in 2005. *See reverse for map of recorded locations.*

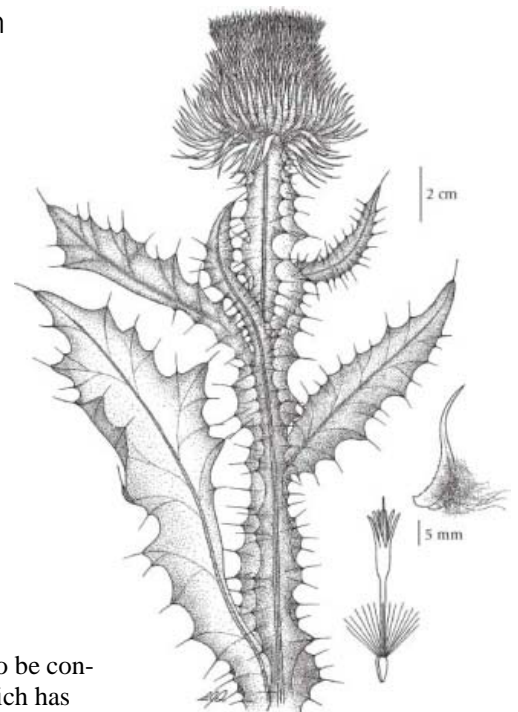
**Known Biogeoclimatic Zones:** IDFun, ICHdw1, ICHxw

**Management Objectives for Central Kootenay:**

- Eradicate or contain plants to present sites.
- Educate gardening public to prevent further introductions.

**For More Information:**

- [www.weedsbc.ca/pdf/scotch\\_thistle.pdf](http://www.weedsbc.ca/pdf/scotch_thistle.pdf)



*Onopordum acanthium*

**Identification Tip:** Not to be confused with bull thistle which has more deeply lobed leaves, smaller flowers and a green colour (rather than silver).

**Credits:** Photo from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. Drawing from E-flora.

**Last Updated:** Jan. 2008

Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee

## *Infestations of Scotch Thistle in the Central Kootenay*

