

Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

PLUMELESS THISTLE *Carduus acanthoides* L.

Over generations both the rate of introduction and spread of noxious weeds have increased significantly. This change is mainly due to an increase in human travel, expanding commerce through trade, and a lack of knowledge of how weeds are spread. By becoming educated about noxious weeds, you're doing your part to help stop their spread and protect the environment.

What is the threat?

If noxious weeds are left uncontrolled, the Nebraska that we enjoy today will look much different for future generations. Do your part, become educated and help stop the spread of noxious weeds.

How did plumeless thistle get here?

[Plumeless thistle](#) is native to western Eurasia. The first record of plumeless thistle growing in North America was at Camden, New Jersey in 1879. Plumeless thistle was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 1967.



What does plumeless thistle look like?

Plumeless thistle is one of 5 nonnative thistle species in Nebraska, so identification is important. There are also 5 native thistles that belong in the State and are beneficial to insects and wildlife. Click on this link to the [Thistles of Nebraska](#) to learn more about Nebraska's thistles.

What is the impact of doing nothing?

Plumeless thistle is unpalatable to livestock and reduces forage production and utilization. It outcompetes desirable vegetation for water, light, and nutrients. If left uncontrolled plumeless thistle will completely dominate and leave the land useless. Because of its aggressive nature, not only is your property at risk but plumeless thistle will spread to neighboring properties as well.

Is plumeless thistle good for anything?

Plumeless thistle seeds are eaten by songbirds, and it is an important butterfly plant.

How does plumeless thistle spread?

Plumeless thistle reproduces only by seed, so controlling this plant at the rosette stage, or any time before bloom and seed production will prevent its' spread. Plumeless thistle is a biennial plant requiring 2 years to complete its life cycle and produce viable seed. The seeds can remain viable in the soil for more than 10 years.

How can I control plumeless thistle?

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [plumeless thistle control](#) include:

Mechanical - Hand digging, removing, and disposing the bloom prior to maturity.

Herbicide - Many herbicides are effective in controlling plumeless thistle.

Biological – The plumeless thistle head weevil (*Rhinocyllus conicus*) has limited success in Nebraska. Biological control agents are considered a tool and should not be relied on to eradicate an infestation.

What is a Noxious Weed?

A noxious weed is a nonnative plant, which is known to be invasive and can be directly poisonous to man, livestock, and wildlife. Noxious weeds compete with crops, rangeland and pastures reducing yields substantially.

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land in Nebraska to effectively control noxious weeds on his/her property. For more information about Nebraska's Noxious Weeds contact your local [Weed Control Superintendent](#)