



Noxious Weed Fact Bulletin

A partnership between Island County Noxious Weed Board & Whidbey Island Conservation District

Canada Thistle, *Cirsium arvense*



Commonly found on Whidbey Island, Canada Thistle, *Cirsium arvense*, is a member of the family Asteraceae, in the Order Asterales. It's a Regulated Class C weed in Island County, meaning that it is widespread in the county, but has been designated for control by the Island County Noxious Weed Control Board because of its potential economic impact to farmers. Property owners are required to control all Regulated weeds.



Canada Thistle is best controlled by digging it up before it goes to seed, but wear heavy gloves, as it has nasty spines. If mowed too early in the season, it will regrow with a low habit and multiple flower heads. Repeated, **frequent** mowing can weaken plants and prevent seeding, and can be an effective control. It spreads both by seed dispersal (each plant can produce over 5,000 windblown seeds!) and by underground rhizomes, so it's a tough one to eradicate once it's established on your property – or your neighbor's!



This link to the King County website is also a good source of information:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/canada-thistle.aspx>

Thanks for your interest in weeds, and as always, if you have more questions you can contact Janet Stein, Island County Noxious Weed Coordinator, at 678-7992, or at: janet.stein@wsu.edu.



For more information on Canada Thistle, visit the Washington Noxious Weed Control Board website here: <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/detail.asp?weed=35>