

# PLUMELESS THISTLE

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Carduus acanthoides*

## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Plumeless Thistle is a very spiny biennial that grows upright up to 8 feet tall. It is a biennial that begins as a rosette of narrow, deeply lobed spiny leaves. It bolts with branched stems which are covered with many spiny leaves. The flowers are small, pink to



purple, and have numerous spiny bracts.

**WHERE DOES IT GROW?** It invades a wide range of habitats including pastures, range land, gravel pits, disturbed areas, roadsides, and natural areas.

**WHY IS IT A NOXIOUS WEED?** It pushes out native vegetation and valuable forage in pastures and natural areas, destroying habitat for wildlife, preventing grazing, and lowering yields for agriculture.



## HOW DO I CONTROL IT?

Plumeless Thistle is a biennial that reproduces only by seed, so your efforts should be to prevent seed production. See the reverse side for information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control options for Plumeless Thistle. Also see our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.



For more information, contact:

**Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control**  
**10905 N. Ramsey Road**  
**Hayden, ID 83835**  
**208-446-1290**

**kcnoxiousweeds@kcgov.us or [www.kcweeds.com](http://www.kcweeds.com)**

*Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208)446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.*

# How to Control Plumeless Thistle

Plumeless Thistle is a biennial that reproduces by seed only. Control is by preventing seed production.

**Mechanical** Digging, pulling, well timed mowing, and regular cultivation can control it effectively by eliminating seed production.

**Cultural** The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Killing weeds is only one step, you have to also replace them with something good. Seed and fertilize so your grass can take nutrients away from the weeds and not leave available open soil for new weeds to germinate.

**Biological** There are several seed feeding insects that have been released for biological control of Plumeless Thistle. Contact Nez Perce Biocontrol Center for more information (208)843-9374 or [nezpercebiocontrol.com](http://nezpercebiocontrol.com).

**Chemical** *\*See our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.*

- **Aminopyralid** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Milestone**. It is broadleaf selective (safe on grass) and can be effective against Plumeless Thistle if applied during the rosette or bolting stages.
- **2,4-D** is the active ingredient in many herbicide products such as **Hardball, Weedar, Hi-Dep**, etc. It is broadleaf selective and can be effective on Plumeless Thistle if applied during the rosette to bolting stages.
- **Metsulfuron Methyl** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Escort XP**. It is safe on most grasses and can be effective on Plumeless Thistle if applied during the rosette to bolting stages.
- **Picloram** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Tordon 22K**. It is broadleaf selective and can be effective on thistles but it is federally restricted and requires a license to buy or apply.
- **Dicamba** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Banvel** and **Vision**. It is broadleaf selective and effective on Plumeless Thistle if applied during the rosette stage.

*Chemical recommendations are based on University of Idaho Extension Bulletin 865 [Idaho's Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines Noncrop and Rangeland Sites](#), the book [Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States](#) published by UC Davis Weed Research & Information Center, and herbicide labels.*