

YELLOW STARHISTLE: LIST A SPECIES
Centauria Solstitialis



County Management Strategy: Eradication.

Status in Delta County: The Weed Program was alerted to Yellow Starthistle (YST) on Stucker Mesa northwest of Paonia in 2008. The infestation was spread out over 600 acres and was about 70 acres of ground cover. Several people observed this weed but did not report it. The infestation was probably at least 10 years old.

Control Methods: Mechanical control works well on small infestations but is labor intensive for large infestations. Herbicides can be applied during the rosette to early bolting stage. Repeat applications are necessary because the seeds germinate over the entire summer. A seedhead fly, accidentally introduced to California, feeds on seeds but is currently not available. However, biological control is not recommended in Delta County because eradication is the management goal for this species. Good pasture management is necessary to keep starthistle populations from exploding. Herbicides used include Tordon and Milestone. Helicopters, ATV's and mule mounted sprayers have been utilized. The 2008 population has been reduced by 80%. Costs as of October 1, 2011 have totaled approximately \$30,000.00

Identification: A tap rooted annual weed growing to 2 feet tall. The rosettes are 6 to 8 inches across and look very similar to a dandelion rosette. Rosette leaves have a distinct triangular tip. The yellow flowers are about ½ inch wide and bloom throughout the summer. Seed production is very high. Bracts at the base of the petals are armed with stout spines up to 1½ inch long. No other part of the plant has spines. Leaves are reduced and grayish green. Plants are much branched and spindly looking.

Other names: None

Similar Species: Curlycup gumweed is much greener, rosette leaves are less lobed, and the flower bracts are not armed with spines, but have curled, soft bract tips. Buffalo bur, a native weedy species, has spines all over the leaf and stem surfaces, and has yellow bell shaped flowers. The leaves are broad and deeply lobed. Several other species in the aster family, such as wild lettuce, sowthistles, and dandelions, have yellow flowers but none are stoutly spined.

Control Timing: In the rosette to early bolting stage during spring and early summer.

Control target: Prevent seed production.

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Photos:

<http://www.ndweeds.homestead.com/Yellowstarthistle.html>

Fact sheets and control:

<http://www.atasteofcolorado.com/starthistle.html>

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7402.html>

http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/ystarthistle.html