

# Canada thistle

*Cirsium arvense*

Minnesota C-Value: 0  
Wetland Indicator Status: FACU  
**Non-native Invasive**



**Leaves:** Deeply divided, sessile, prickly edges

**Stems:** Grooved, smooth to slightly hairy, slightly branching at top. 3-5 ft tall.

**Flowers and fruit:** 2 cm across, pink or white. Seed is 2 mm long, light brown, with a tuft of loosely attached fibers at tip. Flower heads tend to be spineless.

**Plant communities:** Any disturbed area, especially upland fields and shores with fluctuating water levels.

**Comments:** Highly invasive perennial. A prohibited noxious weed in Minnesota. Forms large clonal colonies via underground root systems, and spreads easily to disturbed areas via wind-blown seeds. Most other thistles are biennials, with spiny bracts on the flower heads.

