

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

growth Annual with a simple taproot. Flowers June to September. 10-100 cm.

flower Yellow, solitary or clustered at branch tips. Woolly hairs adorn the cluster of bracts that surrounds the broad base of the head, which is about 1 cm tall.

bract Tipped with slender spreading spines up to 3/8 inches long, tinged with purple or brown. Main spine has smaller spines branching from the base and near the tip.

stems Erect, grayish green, 0.3-0.6 m tall.

leaves Rosette leaves are short stalked and divided into lobes.

Stem leaves narrowly lance-shaped, attached directly to the stem, with an extension of the leaf blade forming a wing approx 0.1 inch wide, down the stem.

seeds Buff brown with lengthwise stripes, about 1/8 inch long. Seed base hooked at the point of its oblique attachment.

pappus Consists of three rows of white slender bristles unequal in length.



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Elevation:
1500- 5000 feet

Ecotypes Invaded:
Desertlands and grasslands.

ECOLOGY & DISTRIBUTION

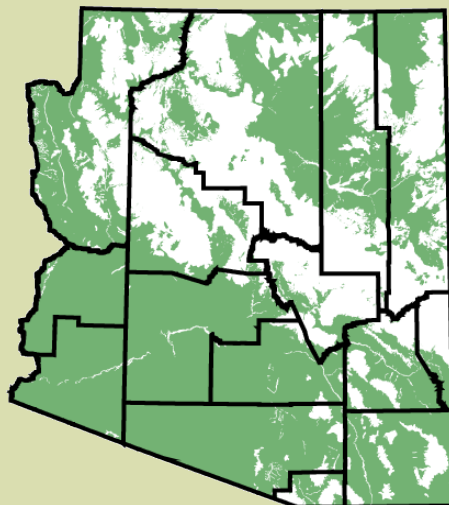
Most of the current infestations in Arizona are found below 4,000 feet in Apache, Yavapai, Maricopa, Pinal, Graham, Pima, and Cochise counties.

Maltese starthistle grows in a variety of open areas including disturbed sites, grasslands, rangelands, and woodlands.

Its ability to adapt to a wide variety of habitats gives it the ability to invade many habitats throughout the Coconino, Kaibab and Prescott National Forests.

Replacement of native perennial grass species by Maltese starthistle or other members of the genus contribute to soil erosion. Known to occur in Oregon, California and Arizona.

SUITABLE HABITAT



Suitable habitat based on the Arizona Wildlands Invasive Plant Working Group (AZ-WIPWG) assessment. Green = suitable habitat; White = unsuitable habitat; Gray = unknown. Based on Brown, Lowe & Pase (1980) vegetation communities.

