



KEY  
CHARACTERISTICS

growth  
flower

Winter annual up to 182 cm tall.

Solitary yellow heads on stem tips have bracts bearing long stiff spines. Sometimes plants may produce flowerheads in branch axils. Involucre is about 1.2-1.8 cm long.

Phyllaries have 1 long central spine 1.0-2.5 cm long and 2 or more pairs of short lateral spines and are densely to sparsely covered with hairs.

stems

Stems are openly branched, except in some very small plants.

leaves

Rosette of deeply lobed leaves up to 20 cm long forms first. Lower leaves are 5-15 cm long and reduce in size up the stem. Upper leaves are 1-3 cm long, narrow and densely covered with cobwebby hairs later in the season.

fruit

Achene, one of 2 types, both hairless and about 2-3 mm long. Seeds tan, with white and brown mottling.

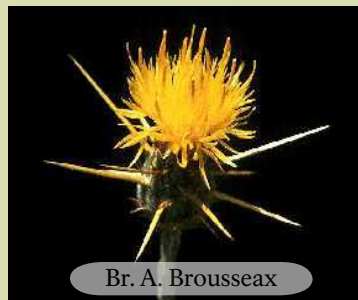
Most have a short (2-5 mm), stiff pappus. Seeds at the periphery of the flowerhead are darker in color and have no pappus.

seedling

Seed leaves long, tongue shaped; first true leaves longer than seed leaves; dull green. →



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flower color

Elevation:  
Up to 5200 feet

Ecotypes Invaded:  
Scrublands, grasslands, woodlands and forests.

## ECOLOGY & DISTRIBUTION

Yellow starthistle populations can increase rapidly and double in less than 10 years even in the southwestern U.S.

Scattered populations occur throughout Arizona from high elevation Sonoran Desert (Arizona Upland subdivision) to montane conifer forest and the total invaded area is estimated to be less than 15,000 acres.

In the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Desert portions of Arizona, yellow starthistle has invaded river valleys.



## SUITABLE HABITAT

