



KEY
CHARACTERISTICS

growth

Plants dioecious and often single sex stands will occur. Clump- or patch-forming perennial to 1 m tall, with extensive creeping roots and small, numerous, clustered heads.

flower

Male ~ 10-14 mm long, female ~ 14-20 mm long. Heads cylindrical to ovoid, not very prickly; clustered and less than an inch high. Petals pink, purple, or white, lobes 2-3 mm long. Involucre 1-2 cm long, 0.5-2 cm wide, often purplish; hairless or w/ white wooly hair. Phyllaries appressed with +/- spreading tips. Spines 1 mm long, fine and dark.

stems

Several, slender; hairless & leafy.

leaves

Surfaces covered with stiff hairs. Lower surfaces +/- covered with soft cobwebby hairs. Forms rosettes but often with few leaves. All leaves oblong to lanceolate, ~5-20 cm long. Margins nearly entire to shallowly lobed and toothed.

Leaf bases sometimes extend briefly down stems as prickly wings to ~ 1 cm long.

fruit

Achenes 2-4 mm long, ~ 1 mm wide, tan. Pappus bristles ~12-20 mm long, tan.



©M. Tu TNC



plants.usda.gov



©J. Randall TNC

flower color

Elevation:
Up to 5900 feet

Ecotypes Invaded:
SW interior chaparral scrub, montane riparian & montane conifer forest.

ECOLOGY & DISTRIBUTION

Common on open disturbed sites, roadsides, fields, pastures, hillsides, rangeland, forest openings.

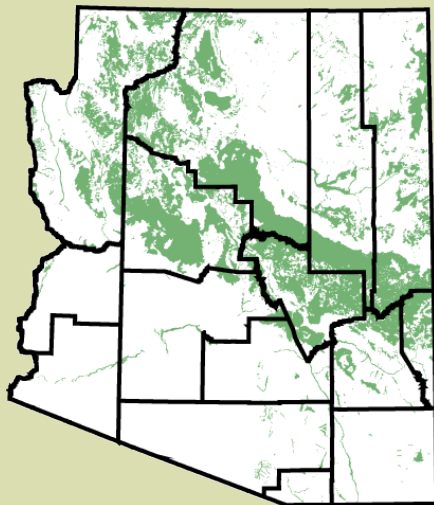
Thistles typically do not tolerate deep shade or constantly wet soils.

Scattered throughout California, (except southern Sierra Nevada), Sonoran and eastern Mojave deserts, and Channel Islands.



©J. Randall TNC

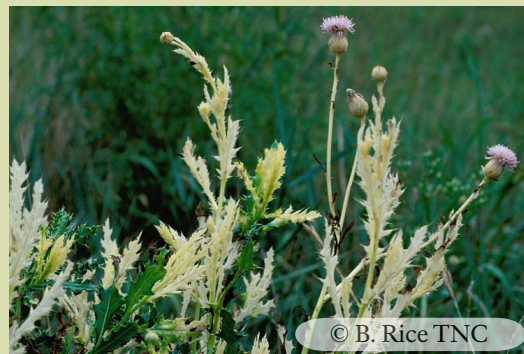
SUITABLE HABITAT



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.



©J. Randall TNC



© B. Rice TNC