

SPECIES FACT SHEET

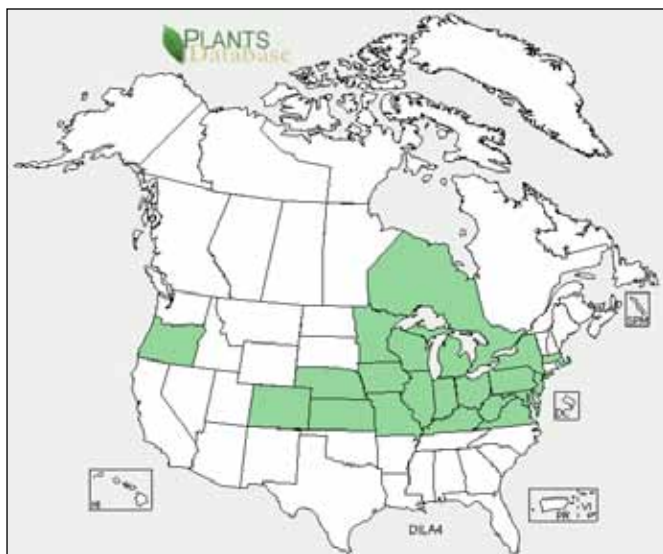
Dipsacaceae (Teasel family)

Cutleaf Teasel*Dipsacus laciniatus***At a Glance**

- Biennial
- Spends at least the first year after germination as a basal rosette, then grows a two- to eight-foot flowering stem.
- Stems are prickly and branch near the top.
- Basal rosette leaves are puckered with scalloped edges. Stem leaves are opposite and deeply lobed with bases that fuse to form a cup around the stem.
- White flowers are very small and pack into dense, cone-shaped heads.
- After flowering, the plant becomes woody and persists through the following winter.

Habitat and Ecology

Cutleaf teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*) is currently found in the Northeast, the Midwest, Colorado, and Oregon. Native to Europe and temperate Asia, cutleaf teasel may have been introduced to North America as early as the 1700s. It was likely cultivated for its role in producing wool or for its use



Map of common teasel distribution from the USDA PLANTS database (<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=DILA4>).

EXOTIC

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Many small, white flowers, each blooming for only one day, pack into a cone-shaped flower head.

as an ornamental. Its frequent use in dried flower arrangements may aid its dispersal; for example common teasel often occurs in and near cemeteries. Cutleaf teasel also commonly disperses along roads and waterways. It occupies sunny and open sites, such as riparian areas, meadows, grasslands, savannas, forest openings, and disturbed sites. Cutleaf teasel may not seriously reduce biodiversity, but it has the potential to become more of a problem invasive species.

Description

Cutleaf teasel is a biennial forb that remains a basal rosette during its first year of growth and later grows a two to eight-foot tall flower stem. The number of years the plant takes to bolt strongly depends upon the growth of rosette.

The stems are prickly and branch near the top. After flowering, the stems become woody and persist through the following winter. The root system consists of a thick taproot and fibrous secondary roots. Cutleaf teasel reproduces by seeds.

Leaves

The leaves of the basal rosette are puckered with scalloped edges. The stem leaves are opposite and deeply lobed. Basal rosette leaves have short stems, but stem leaves fuse around the flowering stem to form a cup that collects rainwater.

Flowers and Fruits

Each flower head contains 250 to 1,500 flowers that are packed into dense, cone-shaped heads. Each flower blooms for only one day. The flower itself has white petals united into a tube with four lobes. Four stiff, upwardly curving bracts are located underneath the flower head. Cutleaf teasel flowers April July through September in the Midwest and Northeast.

Fruit is a hairy achene, or a dry fruit with a single seed and thin walls that does not open at maturity, like a sunflower “seed”.

Etymology

Dip’sacus comes from the Greek word dipsa, which means “thirst”. It refers to the fused leaf bases that collect rainwater. Lacinia’tus means torn or deeply cut.

Ethnobotany

The flowers of common teasel were used to tease wool.

Similar Species

Common teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) is very similar, but it has lavender flowers and does not have lobed leaves.

Control Methods

Possible control methods are explained at these websites:

- <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/forb/dipspp/all.html>
- <http://mdc.mo.gov/nathis/exotic/vegman/ten.htm>



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Unlike common teasel, cutleaf teasel has deeply lobed leaves.

References

- Cardina, J., C. Herms, T. Kock, and T. Webster. No date. Common teasel in Ohio Perennial and Biennial Weed Guide. Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center Extension. Available at <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/singlerecord.asp?id=850> (accessed 26 March 2010).
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- Gucker, C. L. 2009. *Dipsacus fullonum*, *D. lacinatus*. In Fire Effects Information System. US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Sciences Laboratory. Available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis> (accessed 26 March 2010).