

# Have you seen these invasive plants?

**Italian and slenderflower thistles** are aggressive, tap-rooted annuals capable of forming dense stands that outcompete desirable forage plants.

***Learn more at [www.nwcb.wa.gov](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov)***



Flowers are pink, in terminal clusters and covered in cobwebby hairs. Italian thistle flowerheads are in clusters of 1-5, while slenderflower has clusters of 5-15.

Both thistle species have spiny-lobed leaves and spiny-winged stems. The underside of the leaves and stems are covered with cobwebby hair.



Italian thistle tends to grow taller than slenderflower thistle, though both can reach 6 feet tall.

## Why are slenderflower (*Carduus tenuiflorus*) & Italian (*C. pycnocephalus*) thistles noxious weeds?

- Both thistles displace desirable forage species, impacting livestock and wildlife grazing.

## Where do you find these thistles?

- Italian and slenderflower thistles can be found in pastures, rangelands, right-of-ways and waste areas.
- Italian and slenderflower thistle can be confused with Canada thistle, a Class C weed. However, Canada thistle stems are not spiny, flower heads are not tightly clustered and roots are rhizomatous.

## What can you do?

- Learn to correctly identify these Class A noxious weeds.
- Please note that eradication of these plants is required in Washington State to prevent them from gaining a foothold.
- Report any sightings to your county noxious weed control board or to [noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov](mailto:noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov).

