



The
Noxious Weed
Coloring Book

Washington State
Noxious Weed Control Board

Artwork by Kathy Merrifield and Laurel Baldwin

NOXIOUS WEEDS ARE EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM!

Plants are an essential part of our lives. They make the oxygen we breathe and the food we eat. They also add color and beauty to our houses and yards. We couldn't get along without them! But some plants cause problems.

*People have brought plants to Washington from other parts of the world. Sometimes people brought them here on purpose because they were pretty. Other plants arrived accidentally. Some of these newcomers arrived without any natural enemies, like insects, to help keep them under control. In some cases, these introduced plants have spread wildly and caused big problems. We call these plants **noxious weeds**.*

Noxious weeds affect everyone in Washington. Because they compete with crops, noxious weeds decrease the amount of food that farmers can grow on their land. Some noxious weeds are poisonous to people and animals. Noxious weeds also crowd out many of our beneficial native plants, which harms animals that depend on native plants. Lakes and streams are also affected by noxious weeds. In some places, noxious weeds grow so thickly that people can no longer go swimming, fishing, or boating. People in Washington have drowned after getting tangled up in noxious weeds.

You can help stop noxious weeds! Learn what plants cause problems and be careful not to spread them around. Don't plant noxious weeds - help your parents choose pretty native plants for your yard. Check your clothing and family car for noxious weed "hitchhikers." Never dump your aquarium in a lake or stream. With these simple steps, you can help protect Washington from the harmful effects of noxious weeds!

***What noxious weeds have you seen in
your neighborhood?***

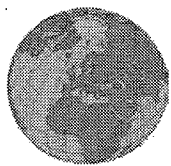
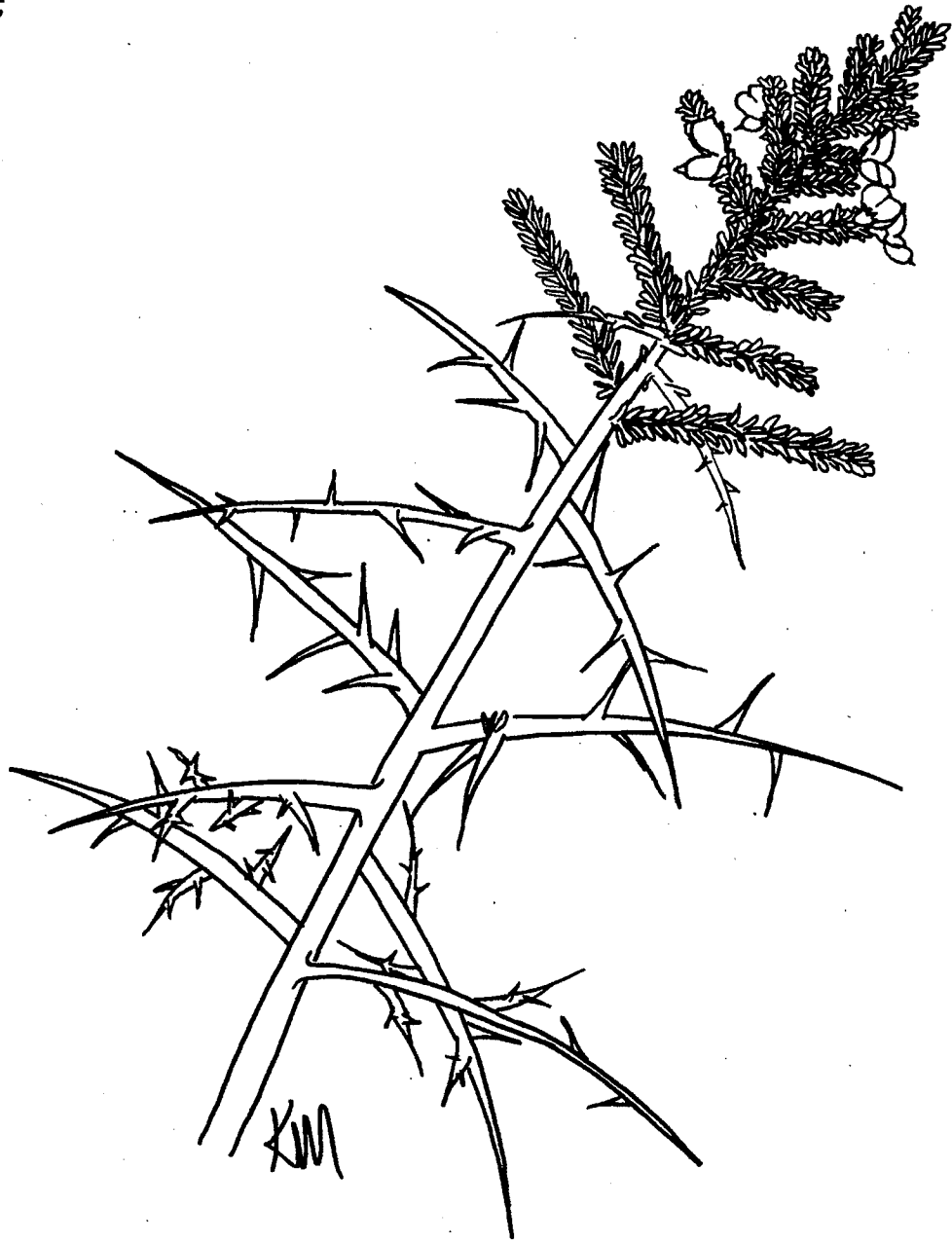
Dalmatian toadflax



A native of Eurasia, Dalmatian toadflax was brought here for use as a garden plant because of its yellow flowers. However, this species can be a big problem. Dalmatian toadflax crowds out our native plants and other beneficial plants that animals depend on for food. In addition, many animals don't like the taste of Dalmatian toadflax.




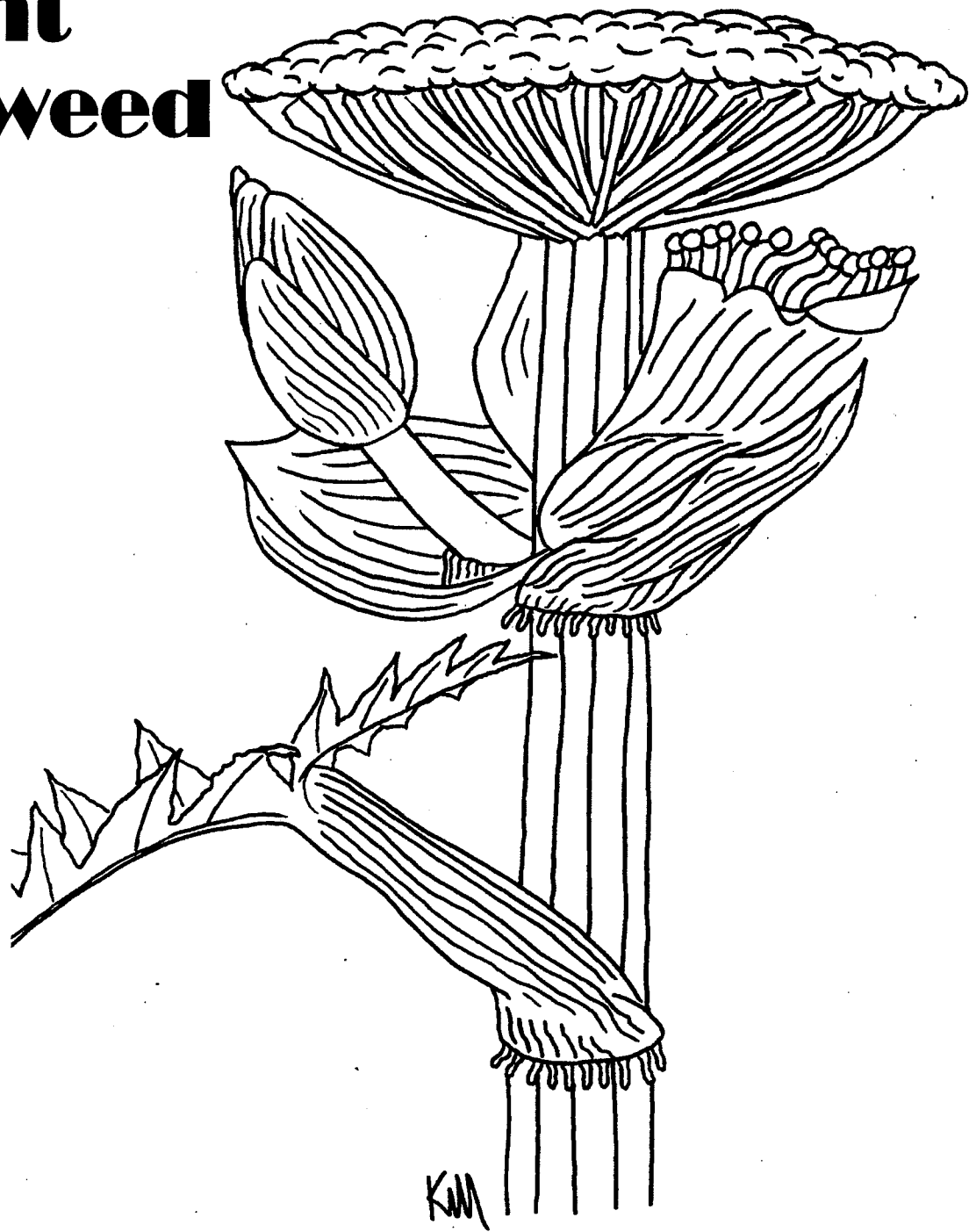
Gorse



hazard.

People brought gorse from Europe as a garden plant. However, once this spiny, yellow-flowered plant gets going, it forms dense thickets that make land useless for other purposes. Gorse also contains an oil that burns easily. This makes gorse a fire

Giant hogweed



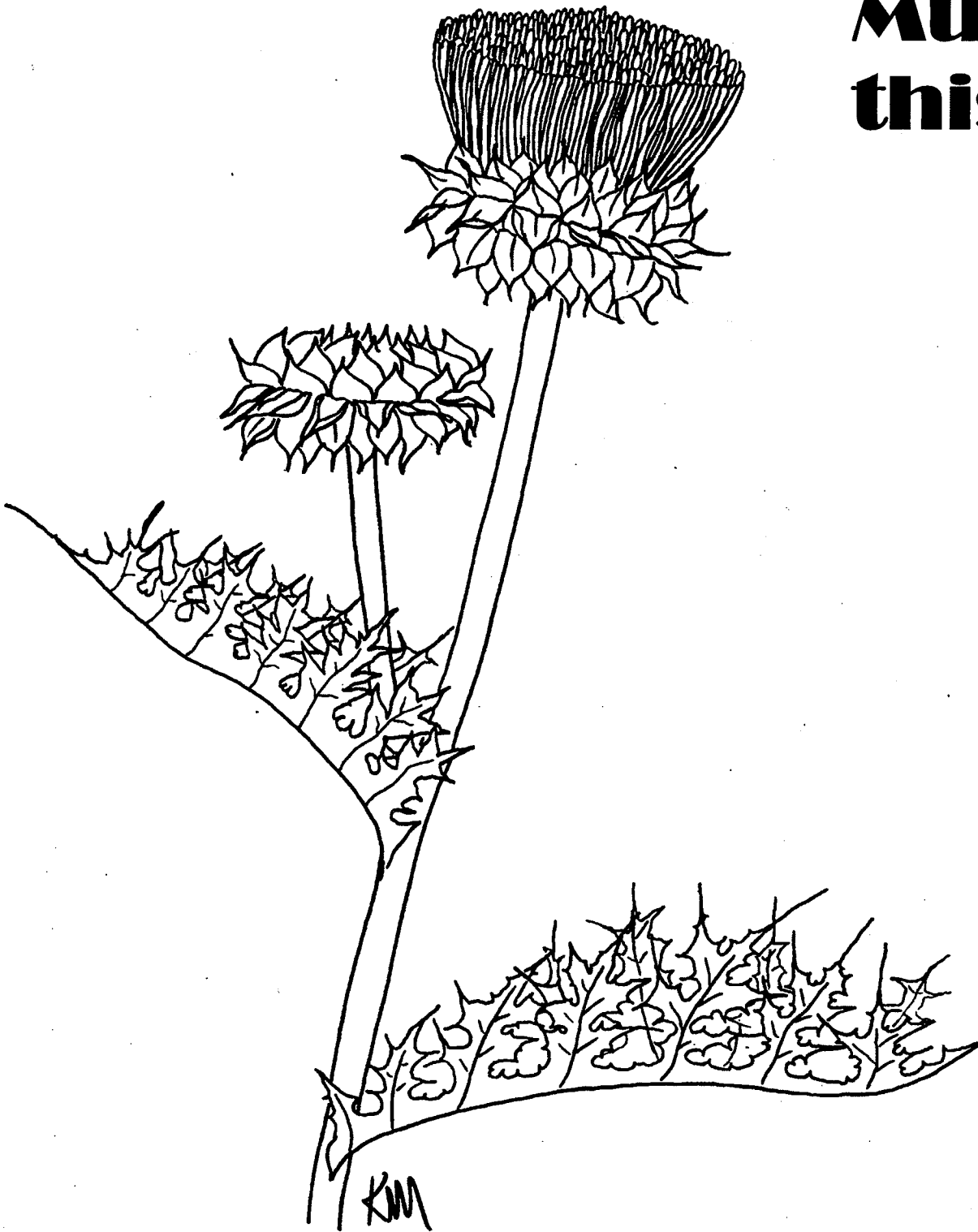
Giant hogweed grows up to fifteen feet tall and has large clusters of white flowers. People brought it here from Asia to use as a garden plant. However, it has escaped from gardens and now grows along roadsides and streams. Giant hogweed is a particular problem because its sap causes serious burns that may develop into purplish or blackened scars.

Knapweed



Knapweeds, which are native to Eurasia, were brought here accidentally and as garden plants. Most of the knapweeds that were brought to Washington have pink, purple or white flowers. Knapweeds create problems by crowding out our native plants and other beneficial plants that animals depend on for food. Many animals don't like the taste of knapweeds.

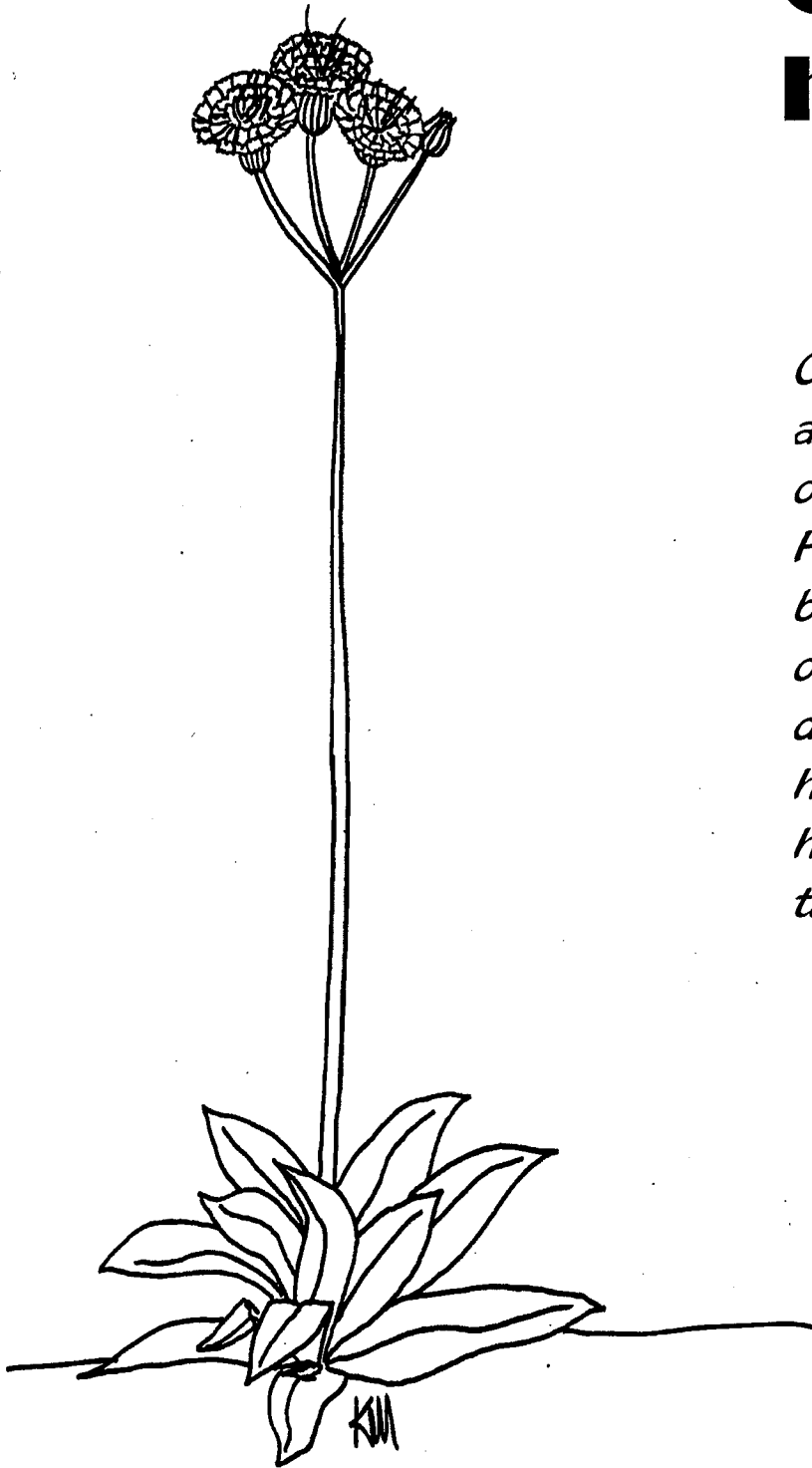
Musk thistle



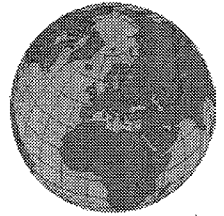
A native of Eurasia, musk thistle is a spiny plant with rose or purple flowers. Because of its spines, most animals avoid it. Musk thistle grows in pastures, meadows, and fields, where it crowds out plants that livestock and other animals need for food.



Orange hawkweed



Orange hawkweed is spread around by people who think its orange flowers are pretty. However, this European native is a big problem for cows, sheep, and other animals. Many animals don't like the taste of orange hawkweed. In addition, orange hawkweed crowds out better-tasting plants.

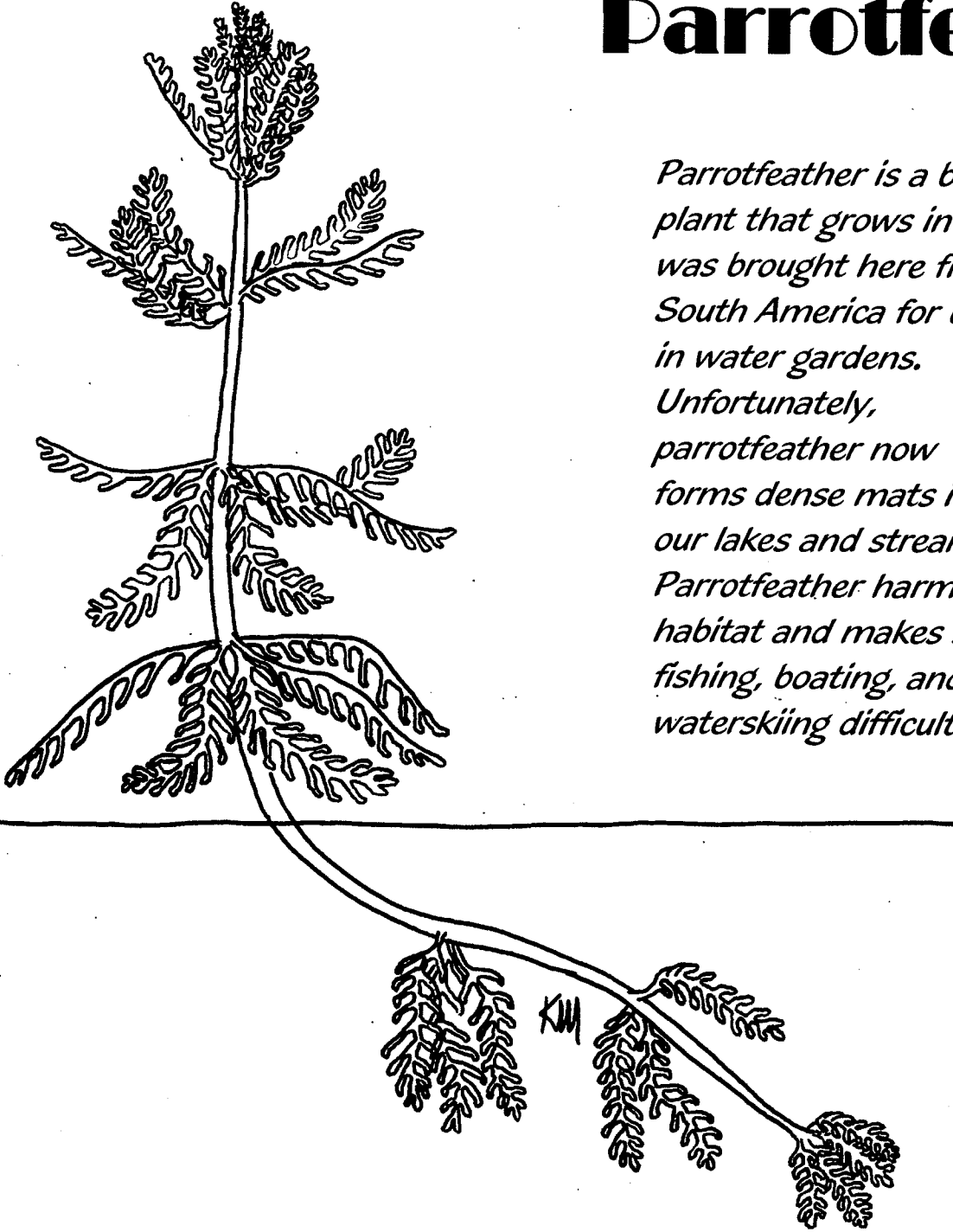
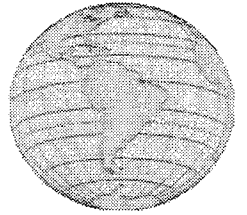


Parrotfeather

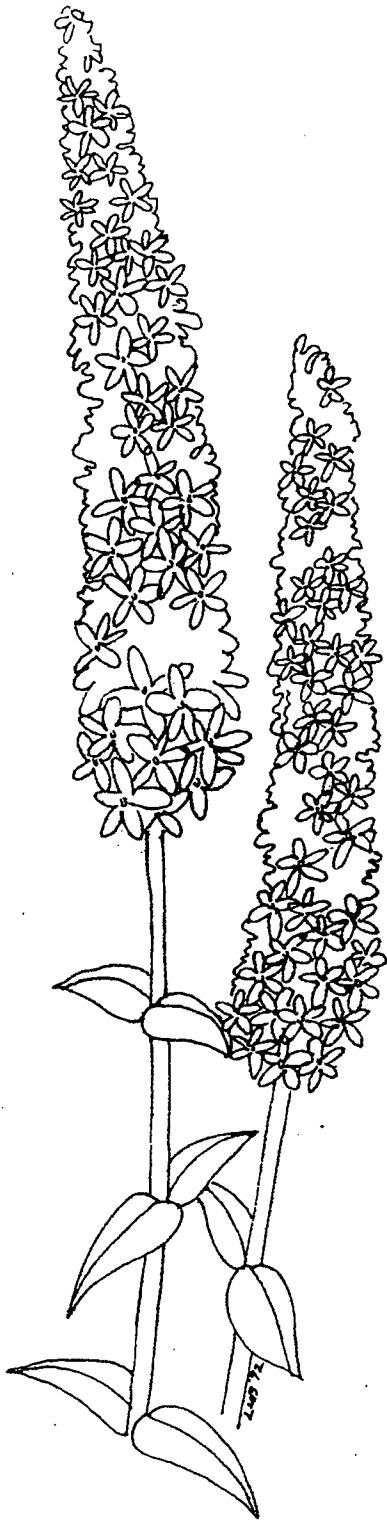
Parrotfeather is a bright green plant that grows in water. It was brought here from South America for use in water gardens.

Unfortunately, parrotfeather now forms dense mats in some of our lakes and streams.

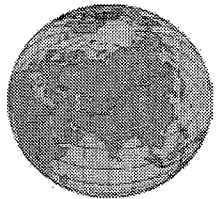
Parrotfeather harms fish habitat and makes swimming, fishing, boating, and waterskiing difficult.



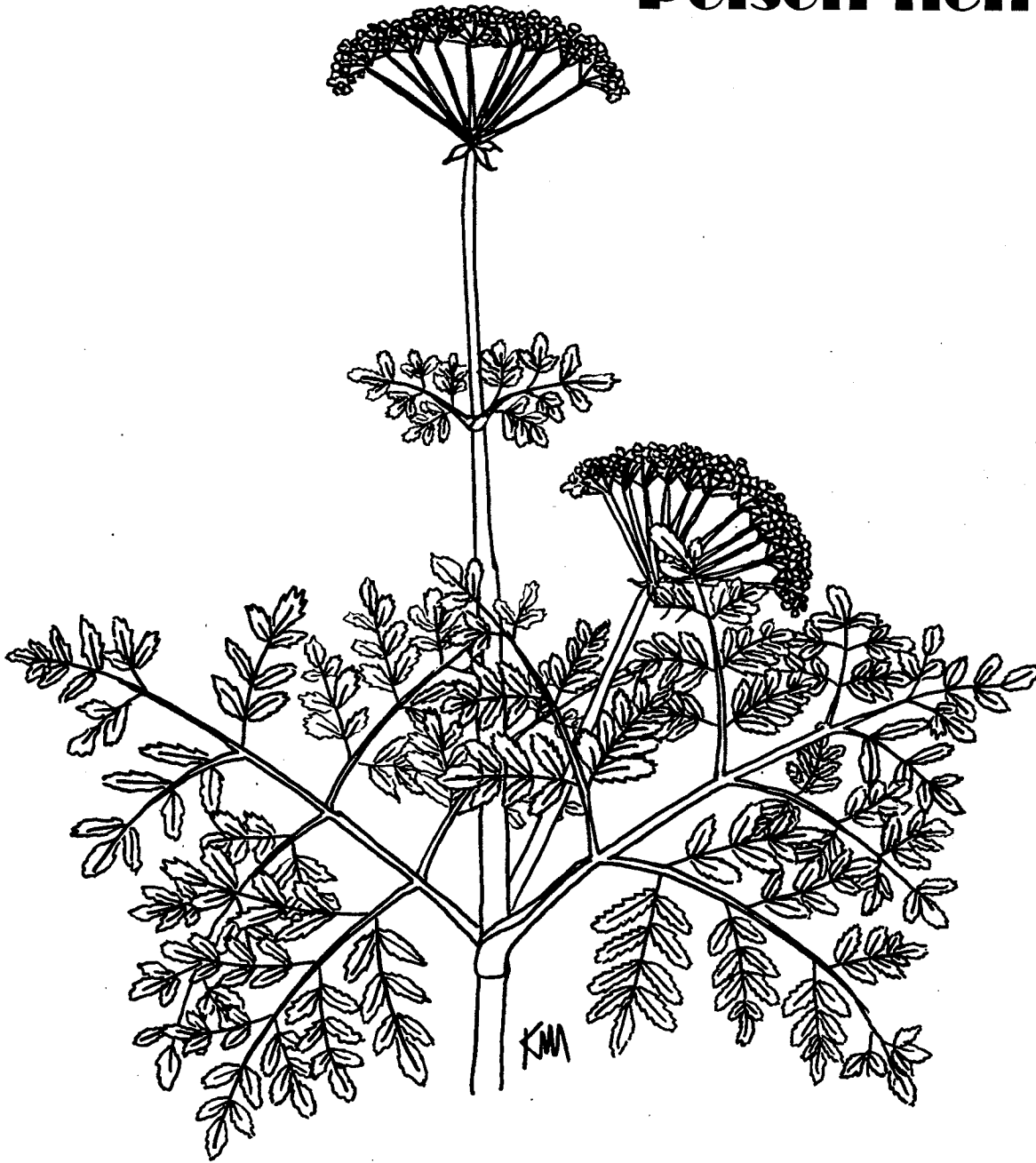
Purple loosestrife



Because of its beautiful purple flowers, purple loosestrife was brought here from Eurasia for use as a garden plant. However, loosestrife has escaped gardens to become a big problem in wetlands. Purple loosestrife crowds out native wetland plants and destroys wildlife habitat. It can also clog waterways and damage water quality,

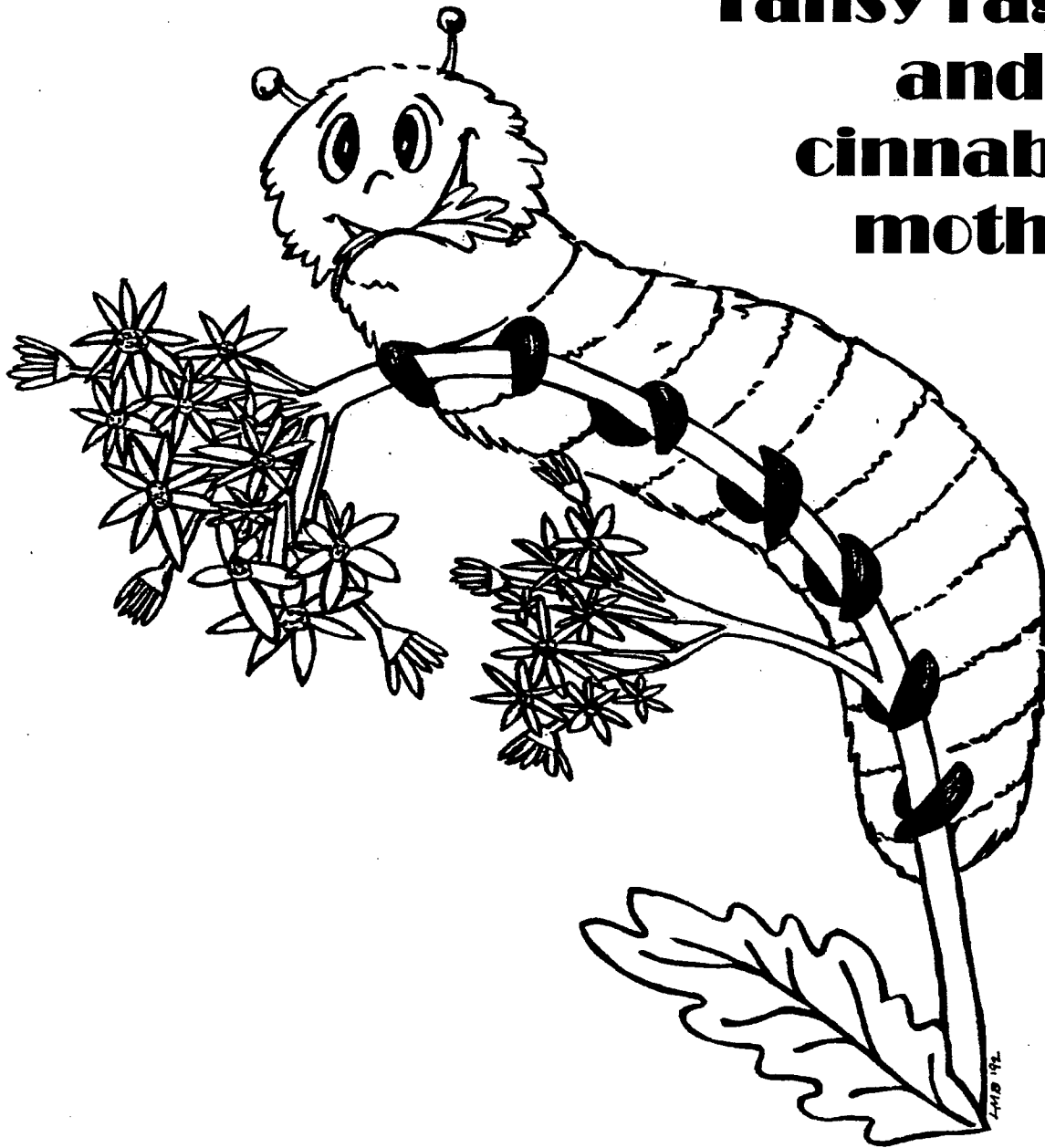


Poison-hemlock



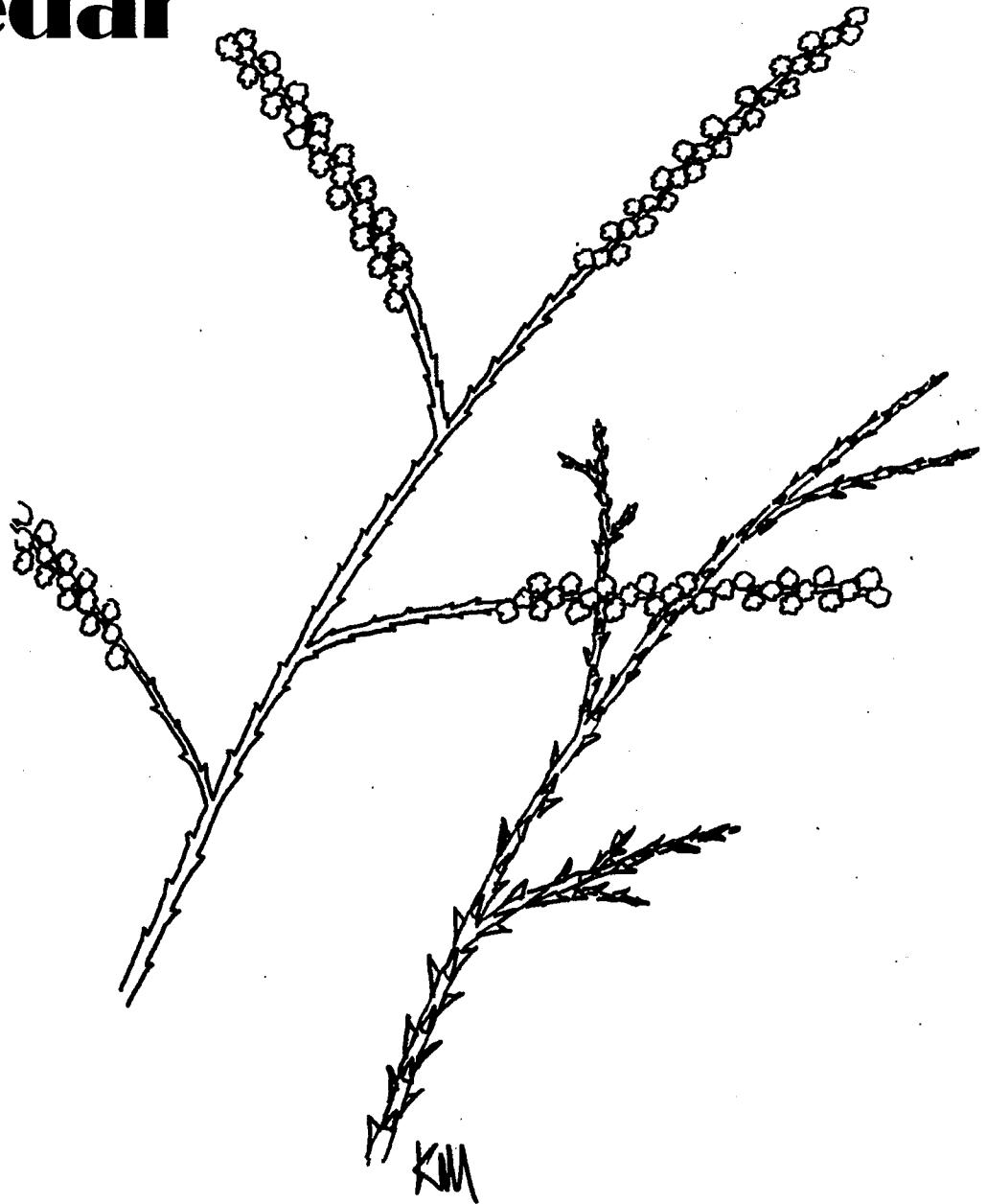
Poison hemlock is a European native with many small, white flowers and purple-spotted stems. All parts of this plant are poisonous to humans and many animals. Some people have died because they confused this plant with parsley. Never eat a plant unless you're sure what it is.

Tansy ragwort and cinnabar moths



A native of Europe, the yellow-flowered tansy ragwort plant is poisonous and can kill cattle and horses. Tansy ragwort also crowds out beneficial plants. The cinnabar moth, which eats tansy ragwort, was brought from Europe to help control this plant. When young, these insects have black and orange stripes. When they become moths, there is a red triangle on their wings.

Saltcedar



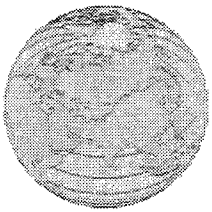
Saltcedar, which has pink or white flowers, was brought here from Eurasia. Intended for use as a garden plant, saltcedar has become a big problem because it can drink up to 200 gallons of water a day! In some areas, it has even dried up springs and marshes. Saltcedar also makes a salt that keeps other plants from growing.

Sulfur cinquefoil



Sulfur cinquefoil is a Eurasian plant with light yellow flowers. Sulfur cinquefoil crowds out our native plants and other beneficial plants that animals depend on for food. In addition, most livestock and wildlife won't eat sulfur cinquefoil because they don't like its taste.

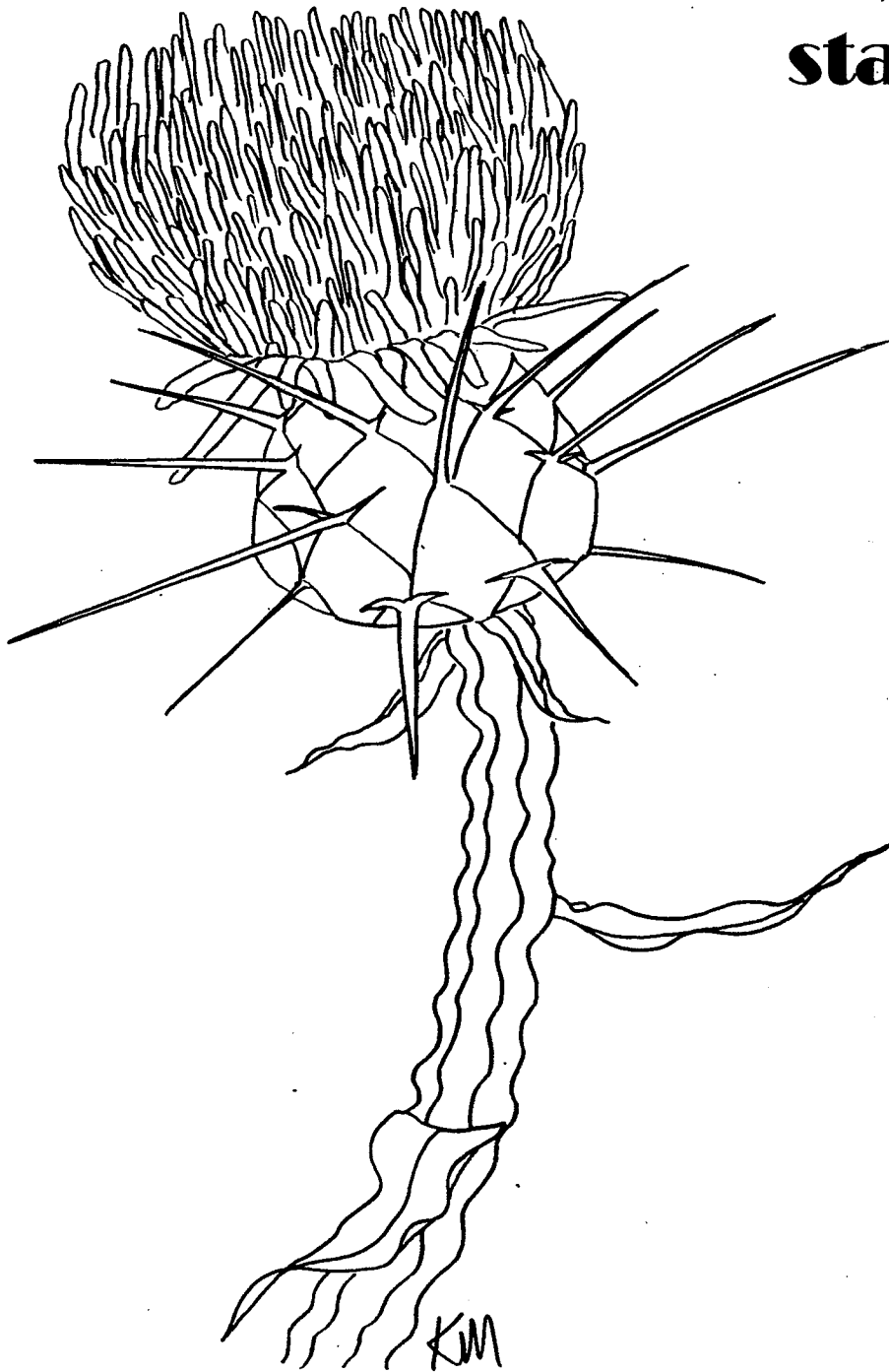
Leafy spurge



Leafy spurge, which has yellow-green flowers, was accidentally brought here from Eurasia, and it's become a huge problem! It crowds out native plants and other beneficial plants that animals need for food. Many animals won't eat leafy spurge. In addition, its sap can irritate the skin of people and animals.

If it gets in your eye, leafy spurge sap can even cause blindness!

Yellow starthistle



*A native of southern Europe, **yellow starthistle** probably arrived here in soil carried on ships. Yellow starthistle crowds out our native plants and other beneficial plants that animals depend on for food. Yellow starthistle also has sharp spines that can hurt people and animals. This plant is particularly harmful for horses because it causes chewing disease, which can kill them.*