



Bull thistle

Cirsium vulgare



Bull thistle

General	Family: Sunflower (Asteraceae) Introduced from Europe and Asia Colorado List B - ERADICATION REQUIRED IN JEFFCO
Habitat	Biennial forb Found in drainages, meadows, rights-of way, disturbed sites
PLANT	
Vegetation	Plants 2-6+ feet tall Leaves alternate 3-12 inches long, deeply lobed, tipped with spines Prickly on top with cottony hairs on the underside Leaves on older plants clasp the stem and are divided into segments Stems are winged
Roots	Taproot
Flower	July-September Purple urn-shaped Single at the end of branches 1½ - 2 inches wide and to 2 inches long Bracts covered with spines
Seedling	Rosettes to 3 feet wide
Seed	Up to 4,000 per plant
Reproduction	Seed

CONTROL – CHEMICAL

Timing	Herbicide	Notes
Spring or Fall Rosette	2,4-D (various) Aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron (Perspective) Aminopyralid (Milestone) Chlorsulfuron (Telar) Clopyralid (Transline) Dicamba (various) Metsulfuron (Escort XP) Picloram (Tordon) Restricted Use Triclopyr (Garlon 3A, Garlon 4)	Use of a surfactant is recommended for most herbicides to help increase contact with the vegetation and to facilitate herbicide uptake. Refer to the specific label for the appropriate type of surfactant. Treating at the rosette and early bolt stage stops biennial weeds from using resources that desirable plants need to prosper. Refer to the individual label for allowed sites, specific timing, and restrictions about grazing and haying. Formulations of more than one active ingredient are available. For established populations, control will take a few years so treatment will need to be repeated.
Spring to Early Summer To bolting stage	Aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron (Perspective) Aminopyralid (Milestone) Chlorsulfuron (Telar) Clopyralid (Transline) Imazapyr (Arsenal) Metsulfuron (Escort XP) Picloram (Tordon) Restricted Use	

CONTROL -- NON-CHEMICAL

Technique	Timing	Method
Biological	N/A	
Burning	N/A	
Cultivation	Spring to Fall Rosettes and young plants without flower heads	May need to be repeated throughout the season and on an annual basis until the seedbank is exhausted. May allow more seeds to germinate due to disturbance.
Grazing	N/A	
Mowing	Spring to Early Summer	When flowerbuds form but before flowering. Plants will resprout. Repeat as needed throughout the season. Works best when combined with fall herbicide treatments.
Prevention	Anytime	Maintain the health of the site by encouraging healthy stands of grass.
Removal	Spring to Early Summer Rosette to Bolting	Remove rosettes and young plants before they are more than 8-10 inches tall (before flower buds form). Remove at least the top couple inches of the taproot. Repeat as new rosettes germinate.
	Summer - Flowering	Remove flower heads, bag, and dispose of in the trash or landfill. Sever root a least a couple inches below the soil. Plants without flower buds do not need to be put in the trash.
	Fall - Rosette	Remove rosettes and at least the top couple inches of the taproot.
	Pulling when plants are small results in less bulk and makes disposal easier. Pulling will disturb the soil so it may contribute to more of the seedbank to germinate.	

Use all chemicals according to the manufacturer's label. The label will provide specific instructions including allowed sites, application methods, rates, storage, re-entry requirements and personal protective equipment. No specific recommendation or endorsement is made or implied by listing the above methods or products. 7/2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chemical					Rosettes and early-bolt stage				Rosettes			
Rosette Removal				Remove top few inches of the root					Remove top few inches of the root			
Plant Removal					Bag flowers and put in trash. Remove top few inches of the root							
Flower Removal						Bag flowers and put in trash						
Mowing					Plants without flowers. Repeat							
Cultivation					Plants without flowers							