



## NOXIOUS WEED FACT SHEET

# Yellow Starthistle

*Centaurea solstitialis*



**Description:** Yellow starthistle is a member of the sunflower or daisy family, Asteraceae (Compositae). As its name indicates, it is characterized by a yellow thistle-like flower with 3/8- 3/4 inch yellowish spines in star-like arrangement at the base of the flower head. The stem and leaves are a dull green color and covered with fine woolly hairs. As leaves ascend the stem they become shorter and narrower with pointed tips. Their arrangement is alternate and the leaf bases extended down the stem producing a winged effect. It has a deep taproot.

**Impacts:** Yellow starthistle was introduced to the western United States from the Mediterranean. It has spread extensively throughout California and to the Pacific Northwest. Cattle feeding on yellow starthistle may be poorly nourished and can be damaged by the spiny heads. Seeds for crops and feed become contaminated. **Horses may be poisoned and develop "chewing disease" or E.N.E. (Equine nigropallidal encephalomalacia) if they ingest large quantities (86 - 200 percent body weight) over one to two months. The disease is characterized by acute inability to eat or drink and the horses may die from dehydration and starvation.** Only horses are affected. Chemical substances in yellow starthistle are somehow altered in the processes of digestion and metabolism producing a toxin which causes death of nerve centers in the brain controlling normal eating and drinking mechanisms. There is no cure.

### Control Options:

#### ► Manual Techniques

Great care must be taken in handling this plant due to the threat of injury from spines on the flower heads.

#### ► Chemical Techniques

Currently, products containing the active ingredient *glyphosate* is the only herbicide for the control of yellow starthistle that is considered "low in hazard" by Thurston County's pesticide review process.

**Only products with concentrated formulations of *glyphosate* will be effective. Pre-mixed products do not contain enough *glyphosate* to be effective, use products with at least 40% *glyphosate* .**

**Foliar applications of ROUNDUP PRO™ (a 41% *glyphosate* product):**

**Yellow starthistle can be controlled by using no less than 2% *glyphosate***

Rates, at 4 lb. per gallon A.I.:	2 Percent
To 1 gallon of water add	2.66 oz. <b>ROUNDUP PRO™</b>

- Spot applications with *glyphosate* products are effective. Spot application means the herbicide is applied only to the plants and not on the surrounding plants or soil. Spray each plant thoroughly on the stems and leaves enough to be wet but not dripping.
- Remove domestic livestock before application and wait 14 days after spot application before grazing livestock or harvesting.
- Do not enter or allow worker entry into treated areas during the restricted entry interval of 12 hours. Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.

Products containing the active ingredient **aminopyralid (Milestone™)** are considered “moderate in hazard” and are also a second choice for herbicide control.

### Foliar applications of **aminopyralid (Milestone™)**

- Follow all label precautions and safety measures. Always use personal protective equipment that includes long sleeve shirt and long pants, shoes plus socks.
- As a spot treatment only at a rate of 4 to 6 ounces (pastures section) fluid ounces per acre. Do not apply more than 7 fluid ounces per acre per year.
- Do not enter into treated areas during the restricted entry interval of 12 hours. Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.
- Do not use aminopyralid-treated plant residues, including hay or straw from treated areas or manure from animals that have grazed there within the previous 3 days. Manure from animals that have grazed from treated areas within the previous 3 days may be used on grass areas only as injury could occur to susceptible broadleaf plants.

### Timing:

- Control should take place when plants are actively growing and before seeds are produced.

**READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL DIRECTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS.** Obey all label precautions and safety measures. Always use personal protective equipment that includes coveralls, waterproof gloves, shoes plus socks, and protective eyewear. Use of brand names does not connote endorsement and is for reference only; other formulations of the same herbicides may be available under other names. Information provided is current as of the date of the fact sheet. Pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.



Thurston County Noxious Weed Program

9605 Tilley Road S

Olympia WA 98512

Phone: 360-786-5576

T.D.D. 360-754-2933

[tcweeds@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:tcweeds@co.thurston.wa.us)