

Perennial and marsh sowthistle



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[*Sonchus arvensis* L. and *S. arvensis* ssp. *Uliginosus* (Bieb.) Nyman]

Marsh sowthistle is a subspecies of perennial sowthistle and is the plant most commonly found in North Dakota. Both species have bright yellow flowers but perennial sowthistle flower bracts are covered with gland-tipped hairs, while marsh sowthistle has smooth flower bracts. Both are perennial and have an extensive creeping root system. Lower leaves are lobed, less so higher on the stem, have prickles on the margin, and are 4 to 10 inches long and clasp the stem. The plants contain latex and grow from 1.5 to 6 feet tall. Sowthistle generally flowers from July through September and produces an average of 30 seeds per plant. Seeds have a short viability, usually less than one year. Sowthistle is found in cultivated fields, ditches, meadows and waste areas.

Sowthistle can cause reduced crop yields but is easily controlled by herbicides. Most sowthistle infestations in North Dakota are annual, not perennial species.

