

Plumeless thistle



Plumeless thistle

(*Carduus acanthoides* L.)

Plumeless thistle is a winter annual or biennial and generally is found only in the eastern part of North Dakota. Plumeless thistle is generally shorter than the other noxious biennial thistles in the state and grows 1 to 4 feet tall, but can form dense stands, especially on field and stream edges. The stems are winged, spiny and much branched. The leaves are deeply lobed, narrower than musk thistle and very pubescent underneath. Each lobe has one to three very sharp marginal spines. Flower heads are usually less than 1 inch in diameter, very numerous and pink to purple. Flowers can be singular or in clusters. The bracts are very narrow and resemble spines. Rosettes of plumeless thistle are often 2 feet or more in diameter, like musk thistle, except they are more deeply lobed and much more pubescent.

Plumeless thistle is one of the most common invasive thistles in the mid-Atlantic and upper Midwestern states and ranges as far west as Washington. Plumeless thistle is not on the state noxious weed list.

