

IBERIAN STARHISTLE

Centaurea iberica
Asteraceae, the sunflower family
Category: EDRR

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Iberian starthistle is an invasive plant that displaces native vegetation, reduces hay and forage values, and disrupts recreational activities.
- It's sharp spines deter grazing animals and if ingested are toxic to horses, causing chewing disease.

Description

- Annual or biennial depending on moisture conditions.
- It can grow up to 6 feet tall.
- Plants bolt from rosettes in late spring to early summer.
- Leaves are linear, divided, and narrow with fine hairs.
- Flowers are white-purple with 1 inch long spines emerging from bracts.
- Seeds are plumed, and are the distinguishing feature between it and purple starthistle which lacks a plume.

Introduction and Movement

- Iberian starthistle is native to the Mediterranean, southern Europe and northern Africa, and was likely introduced as a seed contaminant.
- Inhabits roadsides, pastures, fields, and moist areas such as stream banks.
- It can easily spread through seed dispersal by wind, water, or human and animal vectors.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Iberian starthistle and report any sightings.
- Make sure to remove and properly dispose of all seed and plant materials on vehicles, clothing, shoes and pets before you exit or enter outdoor recreational sites.
- Always Remember To:

KNOCK IT OFF!

Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/109132>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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IBERIAN STAR THISTLE DISTRIBUTION MAP

