

Cirsium palustre

COMMON NAME

marsh thistle

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Cirsium palustre (L.) Scop.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CIRPAL

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Prickly thistle with cobwebby hairs over most parts, small magenta flowerheads in clusters of up to 10 at the tip of a thin ± leafless prickly flower stem, up to 1.5 m tall, easy to break.

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered throughout both islands, absent from drier areas, common in Westland

HABITAT

Wet pasture and swampy waste places.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Fibrous rooted biennial. Stems not branched, or branched above, with soft scattered multicellular and fine cobwebby hairs, (20)-80-150-(200) cm tall, ribbed, with coarsely spiny wings between leaf bases; branches slender. Leaves oblanceolate to narrowly elliptic, shallowly to deeply pinnatifid, green above, paler beneath, (5)-10-25-(35) X (1.5)-3-8-(15) cm, with sparse soft multicellular hairs above and beneath, often also with sparse to dense cobwebby tomentum beneath; Leaf lobes narrowly deltoid to linear; prickles pale, 2-10 mm long; uppermost leaves becoming smaller. Capitula cylindric to narrowly ovoid at flowering, erect, 1.2-1.5X 1 cm, in clusters of up to 10; peduncles 0-1 cm long. Outer involucral bracts linear, ciliate; apex acute, not spinous, suberect. Carolla magenta, 11-12 mm long; lobes 3.5-4-(5) mm long. Style slightly exserted beyond carolla lobes. Achenes pale, narrowly obovoid, 3-3.5 X c. 1 mm; pappus 8-12 mm long; cilia on pappus bristles 1-2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

No other thistle has the combination of magenta flowerheads and slender, winged, brittle stems.

FLOWERING

November - to February



Kutaroa, nr Waiouru. Feb 2007. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Inflorescences. Ohakune Mountain Road. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/03/2007, Licence: CC BY.

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

November-March-(May)

LIFE CYCLE

Biennial. Seed dispersed by wind or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1911

ORIGIN

Eurasia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, or herbicidally depending on situation.

ETYMOLOGY

cirsium: A kind of thistle

palustre: From the Latin palus 'swamp', meaning growing in swamps

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Webb et al., (1988).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (1988). Flora of New Zealand Volume 4: Naturalised pteridophytes, gymnosperms, dicotyledons. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cirsium-palustre/>