

Cirsium arvense

COMMON NAME

Californian thistle

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Cirsium arvense (L.) Scop.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CIRARV

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

FEATURES

Rhizomatous perennial often forming large patches. Stems branched above; fine cobwebby hairs below, becoming glabrous above, (20)-40-100-(150)cm tall, ribbed, not winged or sometimes with a spiny wing 0-1-(2) cm long decurrent from leaf bases. Leaves lanceolate, pinnatifid, green above, pale beneath, (2)-4-15 x 1-5cm, glabrous or with cobwebby hairs; lobes deltoid to lanceolate; prickles pale, 5-10mm long. Capitula narrowly ovoid to cylindrical at flowering, erect, 1.5-2-(2.5) X 0.7-1.5-(2) cm in cymes or cymose panicles; peduncles 5-40 mm long. Outer involucral rays linear, ciliate; apex acute, not spinous, erect. Corolla usually pale purple or mauve, sometimes white, 12-18mm long; lobes c. 3mm long. Style slightly exerted beyond corolla lobes. Achenes pale, cylindrical, 3-4 X 1-1.5 mm; pappus 20-25 mm long, shorter in male; cilium on pappus bristles 2-3 mm long. (Webb et al., 1988).

FLOWERING

December, January, February

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

December-April

YEAR NATURALISED

1878

ORIGIN

Eurasia

ETYMOLOGY

cirsium: A kind of thistle

arvense: Growing in arable fields



Cirsium arvense. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



a picture of *Cirsium arvense*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

Reason For Introduction

Accidental

Life Cycle Comments

Perennial. (Webb et al., 1988).

Reproduction

Rhizomatous (Webb et al., 1988). Almost completely dioecious: female plants do not produce viable pollen but male plants occasionally set a few seeds (Webb et al., 1988).

MORE INFORMATION

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