



Fact Sheet 04-18

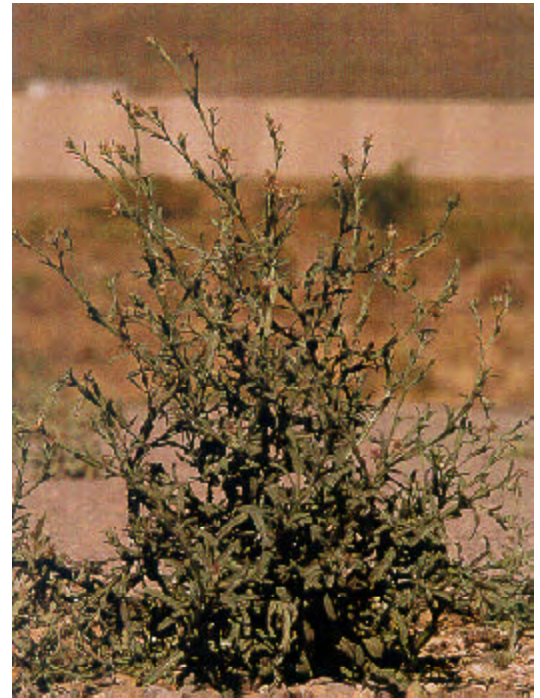
# WANTED—Dead, Not Alive!

This outlaw weed is hiding out! Find it. Eradicate it.

## Malta Starthistle

Alias: *Centaurea melitensis* L.

**M**alta starthistle, native to Europe, can be found on open, disturbed sites, grasslands, rangeland, open woodlands, fields, pastures, roadsides, and waste places. It will rapidly displace native vegetation and create a monoculture of the weed. It may also be toxic when eaten by horses over a long period, causing a nervous disorder called “chewing disease.” Malta starthistle is now a pest in most western states, and is a designated noxious weed by Nevada Administrative Code.



Malta starthistle is similar to yellow starthistle in that they both have yellow flowers and winged stems, but malta starthistle has smaller seed heads with smaller spines which are branched at the base.

### Distinguishing features:

- ◆ Stems are erect, branched, rough, and hairy.
- ◆ Stem leaves are alternate, narrow, and unlobed, with the attached leaf bases continuing down the ridged stems.
- ◆ The small, yellow flowers are about 1/2 inch in height, and have a wooly appearance in the bud stage. Straw-colored spines tinged with purple or brown are produced below the flower head.
- ◆ Seeds are light brown with longitudinal lines and a pappus of unequal bristles. The base has a slight hook.

### Take action:

- ◆ Report its location to the landowner, gardener, manager, park ranger or weed district.
- ◆ Remove all weed seeds from your clothing, shoes, pets, camping gear, vehicle, and tire treads before moving out of an infested area.
- ◆ Monitor ornamental plantings, disturbed sites, and slopes with a southern exposure. Carefully remove any seeds and dig up the plant. Dispose of the seeds, shoots, and roots in a sealed garbage bag through the trash. Herbicides may also be available to kill this plant.

### Your reward:

A cleaner, healthier environment and the satisfaction that you have helped make a difference!

### For more information about controlling this and other invasive weeds, contact:

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension  
775-784-1334;  
Nevada Department of Agriculture  
775-688-1182; or  
Your local Weed District manager or Conservation District:



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