

Yellow starthistle

Centaurea solstitialis L.

Sunflower Family

Key identifying traits

- ❑ Bright yellow flower head
- ❑ Sharp spines or thorns $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" long at base of flower heads
- ❑ Plant grows 2-3 feet tall, has grayish-green foliage and small "wings" on the stems
- ❑ Flower heads are borne singly on ends of branches
- ❑ Old plants or last year's skeletons have a cottony white tuft where flowers were
- ❑ Seedlings resemble a dandelion with deep lobed leaves

Biology and Ecology

- Annual - reproduces only by seed
- Invades rangelands, roadsides, and other disturbed areas
- Thrives in sunny sites - does not tolerate shade
- Toxic to horses in large amounts
- Flowers June through October
- Can have several flushes of plants per year

Control

Prevention - Learn to identify the plant; know your property; beware of fill dirt, hay and seed from outside your area; and confirm identification of any possible sightings

Biological - Over the years, several agents have been released in our county; no visible impact to date

Cultural - Competitive vegetation helps although plants can invade well managed areas

Mechanical - Killed by cultivation and tillage or by pulling; needs to be before bloom or, if after, bag or burn plants in a pile as appropriate; seed bank will be present for years

Chemical - Several effective at label rates when applied pre bud



Where found – Common in the Gold Hill area near Kettle Falls with smaller infestations found on open south and west slopes elsewhere in Stevens County.