



DESCRIPTION: Canada thistle is a 2 to 5 foot dioecious perennial forb with slender, grooved stems that branch only at the top. Stems are slightly hairy when young and progressively more hairy as the plant matures. The leaves are smooth, oblong, tapering, somewhat lobed, and characterized by crinkled edges with numerous spines along the margins. Numerous and fragrant purple flowers grow to 3/4 inch in size from July to September. The small, light-brown seeds are slightly tapered, and have a tuft of tan hair loosely attached to the tip to enable wind dispersal.