

Perennial sow-thistle

Sonchus arvensis

Minnesota C-Value: 0
Wetland Indicator Status: FAC-
Non-native



Leaves: Alternate. Smooth surface with teeth on leaf edges. Can reach 30 cm. Pinnately-shallow lobed leaves; teeth end in small prickles. Upper leaves may lack lobes.

Stems: 16-60 in. tall erect stem containing milky juice. Stems are hairless below the inflorescence. Branching occurs only near the top of the plant.

Flowers and fruit: Flower head is 1-2 in. wide. Yellow ray flowers. Multiple heads form open, branched clusters. Wrinkled, dry seeds with 5 ribs on each side. Tufted with silky white hairs for wind dispersal.

Plant communities: Disturbed sites such as cultivated fields, pastures, woodlands, roadsides, and gardens.

Comments: Introduced perennial weed. Prohibited noxious weed in Minnesota. Similar to prickly lettuce (*Lactuca scariola*) which has spines along each leaf midvein (underside). Other *Sonchus* species are more prickly (*S. asper*) or deeply lobed (*S. oleraceus*).

