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*Sonchus arvensis*

# Perennial Sowthistle

Other common names:  
field milk-thistle

Asteraceae, the sunflower family

Category: CONTROL



## Diagnostic Characteristics

- Perennial; grows 2-4 feet tall, erect, and branches in the upper portion of the plant.
- Leaves deeply toothed to nearly entire; have a clasping base and prickly margins
- Upper leaves are fewer and much smaller than basal leaves
- Flowers are dandelion-like and bright yellow to orange-yellow
- Flower stalks and bracts are covered with gland-tipped hairs
- Plant contains milky juices

## Background

- Native to Europe
- Inhabits non-crop areas, rights-of-way, gardens, cultivated fields, pastures, lake shores, and lawns
- Reproduces by wind-borne seeds and vegetatively by root fragments and creeping roots which produce new shoots
- Very similar to marsh sowthistle (*Sonchus arvensis* ssp. *uliginosus*)

Photo Credit:

J.M. DiTomaso, The Regents of the University of California

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