Canada thistle
Cirsium arvense

Minnesota C-Value: 0
Wetland Indicator Status: FACU
Non-native Invasive

Leaves: Deeply divided, sessile, prickly edges

Stems: Grooved, smooth to slightly hairy, slightly branching at top. 3-5 ft tall.

Flowers and fruit: 2 cm across, pink or white. Seed is 2 mm long, light brown, with a tuft of loosely attached fibers at tip. Flower heads tend to be spineless.

Plant communities: Any disturbed area, especially upland fields and shores with fluctuating water levels.

Comments: Highly invasive perennial. A prohibited noxious weed in Minnesota. Forms large clonal colonies via underground root systems, and spreads easily to disturbed areas via wind-blown seeds. Most other thistles are biennials, with spiny bracts on the flower heads.