

# BULL THISTLE

*Cirsium lanceolatum*

Bull thistles are biennial plants, meaning they live for two years. They begin as a small rosette of leaves and build up energy over the season. The following year they will send up five foot tall stems that produce flowers. After that the life cycle is complete and the plants will die.



Photos: Cecilia Hagen

## REMOVAL

Maintaining good quality pasture will help prevent bull thistle from becoming a problem. Regularly cut the thistles that do appear. Grazing goats and sheep on the pasture can help control the problem as they will eat the flowers before they go to seed. Biennial plants are best controlled by repeated mowing before the seeds come on. Herbicides can also be used to control the plants.