

Prickly lettuce

Lactuca serriola L.

Sunflower Family

Key identifying traits

- ❑ Plants grow erect from 1-5' tall, branching only in the flowering part of the plant unless it has been cropped
- ❑ Leaves are alternate and prickly on the lower side of the midrib
- ❑ Leaves are twisted at the base so they lie vertically
- ❑ Plants contain a milky juice
- ❑ Flowers are small yellow ray flowers
- ❑ Seed heads resemble small dandelions

Biology and ecology

- A biennial or winter annual spreading by seeds
- A plant commonly growing in waste areas, gardens, irrigated crops and along road sides
- This plant is from Europe and is now naturalized over most of North America
- It can be a problem in irrigated crops and orchards
- It has been known to hybridize with cultivated lettuce

Control

Prevention - Learn to identify plants; start monitoring early in the season

Biological - No known biological control in our area

Cultural - Plant competitive grass or other cover crop

Mechanical - Does not tolerate tillage and will pull up fairly easily.

Chemical - the [PNW Weed Management handbook](#) lists Curtail (clopyralid + 2,4-D) and Finesse (chlorsulfuron + metsulfuron) as being good for control of Salsify

Where found - Scattered areas of plants all through Stevens County, becoming especially prevalent along travel corridors in recent years.



Photo by Richard Old, www.xidservices.com