

COMMON SOWTHISTLE

Sonchus oleraceus

HERBACEOUS

Family Asteraceae

Origin Europe

Description An annual herb growing 30-110 cm high. A widespread weed of cultivation, pastures and disturbed areas³. Generally prefers clay and fertile soils. Not generally invasive of bushland but can invade after fire events⁸.

Stems/Leaves Hollow, ribbed stems with milky latex, hairy towards the top of the plant. Alternate, simple dark green leaves deeply lobed and irregularly toothed, ending in small soft spines. Purple tinged mid vein. The upper leaves are sometimes hairy. The lower leaves have broad petioles whilst the upper leaves are stem-clasping⁸.

Flowers Yellow flowers flowering most of the year⁸.

Fruit/Seed Wrinkled achene 2.5-4 mm long, with a pappus of hairs 5-8 mm long³. Dispersal via wind, water and birds. In season throughout the year seeds have a longevity of more than 8 years⁸.

Root system Taproot and fibrous roots³.

Removal techniques

Manual Hand remove entire plant⁸.

Chemical Spray with 1% solution of glyphosate before flowering⁸.

Notes

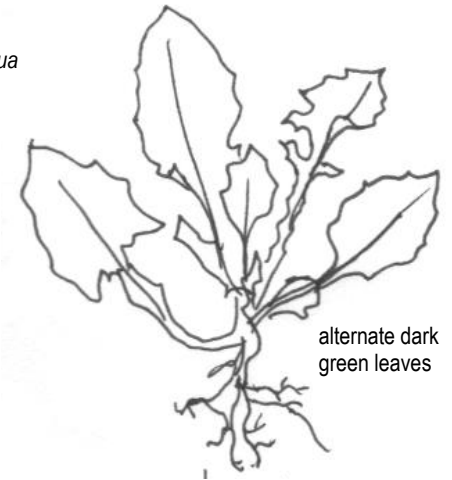
The seed of Common Sowthistle is used to feed caged birds. Formerly use in folk medicine and also as a salad⁸.

The plant tends to re-shoot and seeds germinate after low intensity fire events. This weed is one of the first to appear after a fire⁸.

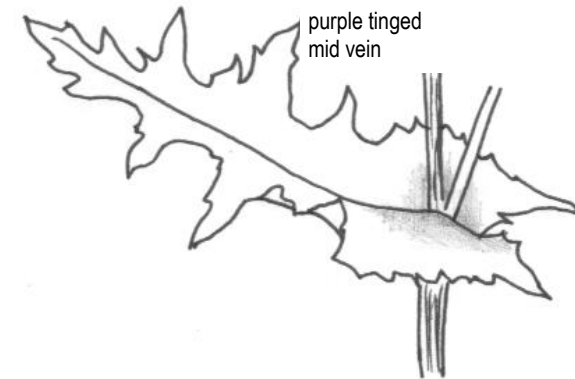
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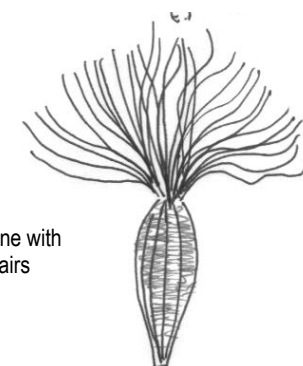
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