

# Please call 1-866-invader if you suspect you have found this species

**Iberian starthistle**  
*Centaurea iberica*

**Other common names:**

**USDA symbol:** CEIB  
**ODA rating:** A and T



**Introduction:** Iberian starthistle is native to the Mediterranean region, southern Europe and northern Africa. It is well adapted to a range of temperature and moisture regimes. Its potential impact on agriculture, wildlife and recreation would be significant.

**Distribution in Oregon:** Iberian starthistle was known to occur only at one site in Clackamas County. It is now considered eradicated in the state.

**Description:** Iberian starthistle is actually a heavily armored knapweed species and not classified as a true thistle. It can function as an annual or biennial depending on moisture conditions. Seedlings will sprout in the fall or early spring forming spiny rosettes in May and June. Blooming continues from midsummer through fall as the plant grows 1 to 6 feet tall. To conserve moisture the plant is covered in fine hairs, with narrow linear leaves retarding moisture loss. Flower heads are purple and arrayed with straw-colored spine-like bracts over 1 inch in length. Seeds are plumed, the distinguishing factor between this plant and purple starthistle.

**Impacts:** Closely resembling purple starthistle, both invasive species have the ability to adapt to a variety of climatic conditions. They are extremely competitive along roadsides and in low-rainfall rangeland, as well as in higher rainfall pastures, where they displace valuable forage. The sharp spines deter grazing animals or wildlife movement and their access to forage. Infestations reduce the value of hay, contaminate seed crops and can reduce the quality of recreational experiences. Iberian starthistle has the potential to become widely established, imposing significant impacts to agriculture and wildland resources.

**Biological controls:** Biological control agents are not used on "A" listed weeds in Oregon. This weed is targeted for eradication or containment in Oregon.

