

Bull thistle *Cirsium vulgare* (Savi.) Tenore

Family: Asteraceae (Composite family)

Life cycle: Biennial

Habitat: Pastures, roadsides, prairies

General description: First year plants form basal rosette up to 2 ft wide; leaves deeply lobed with spine tipped lobes. In second year flower stalk elongates up to 5 ft tall; numerous pink to purple flower heads up to 2 in wide; head surrounded by sharp bracts.

Key ID traits: Individual lobes are narrow and tipped with prominent, sharp spine. Leaves hairy on both sides

Similar species: Musk and tall thistle are biennial thistles, but leaf characteristics are sufficiently different to simplify ID.



Spine tipped lobes of bull thistle

