

prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*) & wild lettuce (*Lactuca canadensis*)

DESCRIPTION:

These two members of the sunflower family are generally similar in appearance. They both have small to medium-sized yellow flowers that bloom in late summer which later develop into fluffy achenes. They are typically 2-4' tall but may reach 6 ft. The overall appearance can be described as looking like an over-grown dandelion. Like the dandelion, they also have a milky latex-based sap. They are annual or biennial weed common to gardens, roadsides and disturbed areas, including recently planted prairies.

Wild lettuce is a native species and is the friendlier looking of the two. As its name implies, prickly lettuce has relatively soft bristles along the leaf margins and stem. It has been introduced from Eurasia, and though it may not seem very appetizing, prickly lettuce is the wild ancestor of the edible lettuce in your salad. Artificial selection is responsible for removing the prickles and latex sap.

-1
Minor
Pest

0
Pesky
Native

CONTROL METHODS:

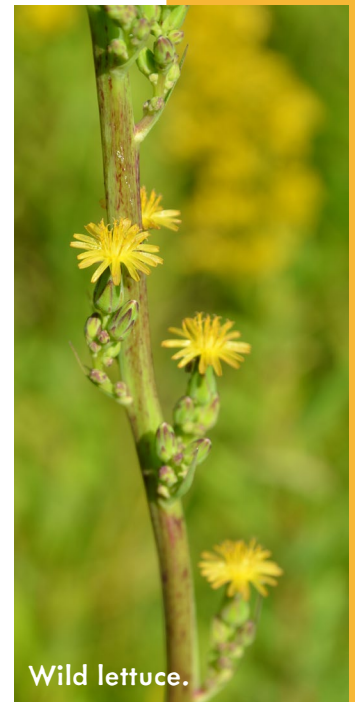
Organic: These plants can be dug or pulled out in loose soil if the population is small enough. Make sure that all of the root fragments are removed. Larger populations can be mowed early in the flowering period, and again if they attempt to re-flower.

Chemical: Glyphosate (Roundup®, etc.) can be used for foliar application applied at 2% a.i. solution with water. Glyphosate is non-selective and should be used with caution to prevent harm of non-target species. Triclopyr (Garlon®, etc.) which is a broadleaf-specific herbicide that will not harm grasses is also effective. Spot application with these herbicides should be done uniformly with a hand sprayer to ensure the entire leaf is covered for maximum effectiveness of the herbicide. Always read herbicide labels carefully before use.

These recommendations are not a substitute for the pesticide label. The label is the law; read it and follow the instructions before applying any pesticide.



Prickly lettuce.



Wild lettuce.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVES:

Prevent the establishment of weeds by establishing a diverse mix of native plants by plugs or seed. While many of our native herbaceous plants can tolerate some sun or shade, wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*), solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*), starry false solomon's seal (*Smilacina stellata*) and golden alexander (*Zizia aurea*) are all adaptable species that can be planted in various conditions.



Prickly lettuce.



Wild lettuce.