

Lettuce, Prickly

[*Lactuca serriola* L.]

DESCRIPTION

Prickly lettuce can be a summer annual or biennial. The woody stems of this plant are hollow, and form in the middle of a basal rosette of leaves. Leaves are deeply lobed, and clasp the base of the stem. The leaf shape is distinctive, with the indentation between lobes forming a "C" shape. Leaves are also oriented at an angle to the stem, with spines on the midrib and base of the leaf. Prickly lettuce has yellow flowers, but these can appear to be white from a distance due to the wooly hairs (pappus) on each seed. This weed is most common in row crops and roadside areas.



Characteristic	Description
Growth Season	summer annual or biennial weed
Growth Habit	early in the season it is a basal rosette, and then produces an upright stem in late summer
Leaflet Number	one
Leaf Margin	lobed
Leaf Hairs	prickles are found on the midvein on the lower surface of the leaf
Leaf/Leaflet Shape	long and linear leaves with rounded notches in leaf margin
Leaf Width	1/2 - 2 inches
Leaf Venation	pinnate
Leaf Arrangement	alternate
Root Type	taproot
Flower Color	yellow



prickly lettuce stem, leaves



prickly lettuce roots

Note: Still not sure this is the right weed? [The Turf & Weed Identification Decision Aid](#) may help. Check the TurfFiles [glossary](#) for definitions of unfamiliar terms.

CULTURAL CONTROL

Proper turf management is important for biennial broadleaf weed control. Maintain a dense, actively growing turf through proper mowing, fertilizing, and watering practices. Mow at the proper height for your selected adapted turfgrass. Coring and traffic control reduce compaction and encourage desirable turfgrass competition. It is best to control this biennial broadleaf weed in spring or fall, if actively growing at these times.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

Controlled postemergence with 3-way broadleaf herbicide mixtures.

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