

****Carduus pycnocephalus***
Commonly: Slender Thistle
Vascular Plant Family: Asteraceae
Flowers in spring and early summer

**Carduus pycnocephalus* is an annual daisy up to about 1m tall. The plants are covered in white cobwebby hairs and the stems have a wing up to 5mm wide. There is a rosette of large (up to 20cm long) prickly leaves at the base and small prickly leaves up the stem. It is native to Europe.



The narrow wing of the stem and the cobwebby hairs can be seen in this photograph.



The flower heads occur in clusters of 1-4 each up to 2.5cm long. The flowers are purple and longer than the bracts surrounding the flowers. The bracts surrounding the flower are in several rows all but the inner most are spine tipped.



The individual flowers are tubular and 5 lobed with a long pappus which aids in the spread of the seeds. The ovary is below the pappus and flower.



The fruit is up to 5mm long, straight and with about 20 ribs along its length. No photograph was taken.

*Indicates it is a weed