

## Common sowthistle

### *Sonchus oleraceus*

#### Description

Common seed crop contaminant.

#### Habit

Winter or spring annual that can reach a height of 4 feet tall.

#### Leaves

Alternate, up to 8 inches long and 2.25 inches wide, becoming smaller up the stem, variable; elliptic, oblanceolate or lanceolate, almost entire to irregular, soft, glabrous, dull green in color, clasping base

#### Stems

Central stem is hairless, dull green in color but sometimes tinted reddish purple. Little branching except near apex.

#### Flowers

Upper stems terminate in small clusters of flowerheads. 3/4 inch across when open, yellow in color, green involucre with 27-35 lance-shaped





bracts, 10-13 mm long, hairy when young.

### **Fruits and Seeds**

Achenes are brown in color, 2.5-3.75 mm, flattened, ribbed, oblanceolate, tuberculate-rugose, with tufts of fluffy white hairs.

### **Habitat**

Native to Europe. Can be found in open disturbed areas, fields, gardens, sand dunes, waste places, roadsides, near waterways, burned areas, construction sites, and rail yards.

### **Reproduction**

By seed.

### **Similar**

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Young plants can easily be hand pulled; older plants may be more firmly rooted making it difficult to remove without breaking off the stems and resprouting. Can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate but resistance is possible with ALS-inhibiting herbicides.

### **Credits**

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