

Featured Pest: Common Burdock (*Articum minus Subsp. minus*)

Originally from Europe Common burdock is a biennial weed that reproduces by seed. It is commonly found in brush, pasture, shelterbelts, right-of-ways, stream banks, along rail tracks, access roads, yard sites and disturbed areas.

Biology: Seedling cotyledons are oval or spoon shaped with a slight notch at the tip. They are light green, smooth, and fleshy. In the first year of growth the plant forms a rosette of broadly triangular to oval bluntly pointed leaves, often said to resemble rhubarb. The leaves are wavy to coarsely toothed and the underside of leaf surface has a light green woolly or downy appearance.



Figure 1. Common Burdock rosette

In the second year the plant re-emerges from the rootstock to produce rosette which is bushier than that of the first year plant. The flowering stalks appear in the second-year. The flowering stems are erect, 60-180cm high, branched, hollow in cross-section and grooved lengthwise. Common burdock produces purple or occasionally white flowers July through September. The mature seed pods or heads are covered with burs which helps to spread seed.

Weed Act Status: Common burdock is a noxious weed in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and, Saskatchewan. Great burdock (*Arctium lappa*), lesser burdock (*Arctium minus*) and woolly burdock (*Arctium tomentosum*) are noxious weeds in Alberta.



Figure 2. Established patch (left), Mature seed pods with burs (upper right), Undersurface of leaf (lower right)

Herbicide Resistance: Herbicide resistance is not known in Common Burdock.

Tips for control: Tillage will destroy burdock seedlings. The mowing of second year plants after the flower stalk forms will prevent seed production and plants will not regrow.

Herbicides such as Arsenal Powerline, Aspect, Garlon XRT & Milestone can all be used to control first-year rosettes. In pastures control options include Grazon XC, Reclaim & Restore II. Fall or late summer treatment ensures that late emerging seedlings will not overwinter.

Similar Weeds: Great burdock (*Arctium lappa*) has larger heads as is taller than common burdock while woolly burdock or downy burdock (*Arctium tomentosum*) has the undersides of leaves covered in fine white hairs. Cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*) has smaller, spiny-margined leaves.

