

***Cirsium rydbergii* Petrak**
Rydberg's Thistle

Family: Asteraceae

Synonyms: *Cirsium lactucinum* Rydberg

NESL Status: G4

Federal Status: None

Plant Description: Perennial herbs 100 to 300cm tall. Stems 1 to several, erect, ascending to lax; leaves very large, blades elliptic, 30 – 90+ x 10 – 40cm, 1 to 2 times pinnately lobed, strongly undulate, main spines 5-15mm, faces often glaucous, glabrous or thinly tomentose, distal leaves much reduced bractlike and very spiny; linear or lanceolate; heads few to many, erect **or nodding** in clusters at tips of distal branches, involucre 1.4-2 cm, phyllary apices lance-ovate, rather abruptly contracted into **recurved spines** 3-25 mm, margins sparingly tomentose or glabrate; flowers pink or purple 16 – 20mm long; flowering late spring through September.

Similar species: *Cirsium arizonicum* var. *bipinnatum* (*Cirsium calcareum*) has consistently erect heads, larger flowers and shorter, slender and stout spines on the phyllaries, *C. joannae* has larger involucre (2.5-4 cm), shorter involucral spines and scabridulous –ciliolate margins

Habitat: Hanging gardens, seeps and sometimes stream banks below hanging gardens, 3300-6500 ft.

Distribution: Garfield, Grand, & San Juan counties, Utah. Coconino & Apache counties, Arizona.

Navajo Nation Distribution: Southern San Juan County, Utah, northern Coconino & Apache counties, Arizona.

Potential Navajo Nation Distribution: Southern San Juan County, Utah, northern Coconino & Apache counties, Arizona.

Survey Period: Best during the flowering & fruiting season from late spring through September or October.

Avoidance: A 200 ft buffer zone is recommended to avoid disturbance; may be more, depending on size and nature of the project. Any activity impacting groundwater will need special consideration.

References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. 2006. Vol. 19: Magnoliophyta: Asteridae, part 6: Asteraceae, part 1. Oxford University Press, New York. 579 pp..

Welsh, S.L., N.D. Atwood, S. Goodrich, L.C. Higgins. 2003. A Utah Flora: Third Edition. Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.



Cirsium rydbergii

©Daniela Roth, NNHP



Cirsium rydbergii

©Viola Willetto, NNFw



Cirsium rydbergii habitat

©Daniela Roth, NNHP