

# Yellow Star Thistle

## The Scourge of Summer

*Centaurea solstitialis*

Member of the Aster Family and Knapweed Genus  
Originated in the Mediterranean Basin, arrived in CA in 1850s



Seedling



Rosette



Flowers

Takes hold in compacted or damaged soil and spreads rapidly

Chokes out other vegetation

Deep tap root

Toxic to horses – it accumulates in their system and once the symptoms are visible it's too late to save the horse

### Control

1. Hand pull or mow when <2% of plants are blooming – this can reduce the reseeding rate significantly. The goal is to get rid of them once the flowers have formed, but haven't set seed.
2. Goats effectively graze on YST, even in the spiny stage - allowing native plants to recover from below
3. Replant area with fast growing natives to out-compete
  - a. Any of the native Salvias or Buckwheats will work well
  - b. or cover crop (crimson clover)
4. Yearly weeding, mowing or grazing can keep it under control afterwards