

# WEEDBUSTERS

A NEVADA  
NOXIOUS WEED  
ACTIVITY BOOK



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University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension

SP-08-09



University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension

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# Weedbusters

## A Nevada Noxious Weed Activity Book

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# What's Wrong With Noxious Weeds?

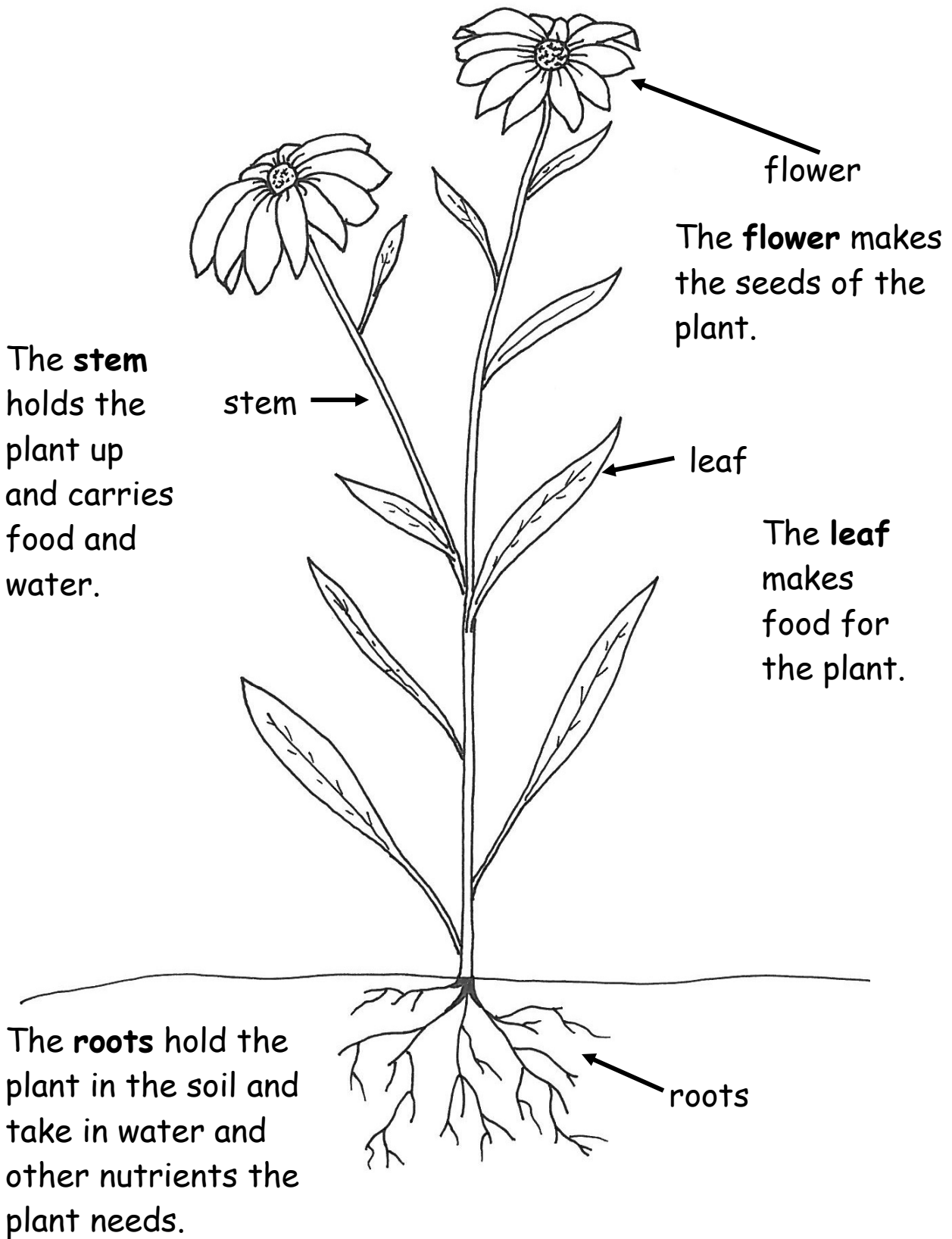
Everyone likes plants and flowers. They make pretty bouquets and dress up our yards and homes. Did you know we can not live without them? Plants make the oxygen we breathe and the food we eat. But, some plants cause problems.

A plant is a weed when it grows where it is not wanted. People have brought plants to Nevada from other parts of the world. Sometimes people brought them here on purpose because they were pretty. Other plants came by chance. Some of these arrived without any natural enemies, like insects, to help keep them under control. In some cases these plants spread very quickly and cause big problems. We call these plants "noxious weeds," and they are named in Nevada law.

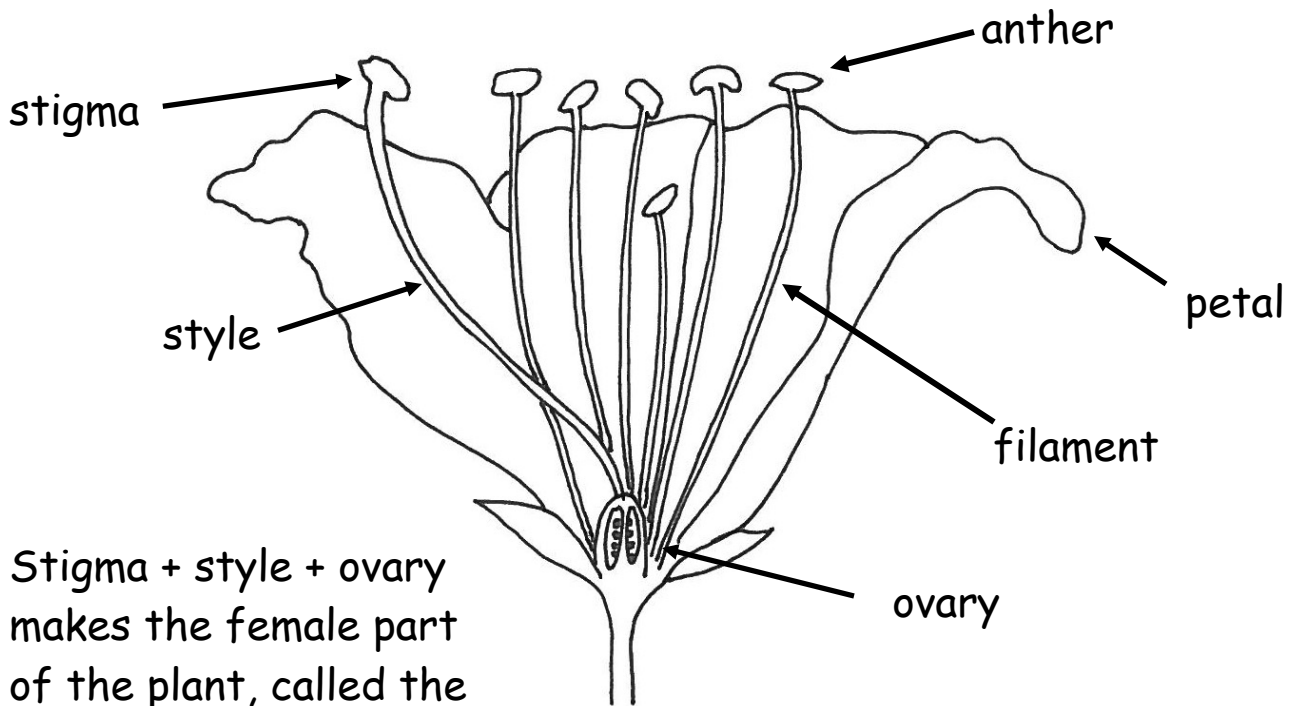
Noxious weeds hurt everyone in Nevada. Weeds make it hard for farmers to grow food. It costs money to try to kill the weeds. Some noxious weeds can make you or your animals sick, and others have nasty thorns or stickers. Noxious weeds also crowd out many of our good native plants, which hurts the animals that need them for food or shelter. Lakes, streams and water quality can also be hurt by noxious weeds. In some places, noxious weeds grow so thickly that people can no longer go fishing or boating.

You can help stop noxious weeds! Use this activity book to learn to spot and report the plants that cause problems. Be careful not to spread them around. Never plant noxious weeds. Instead, help your parents choose pretty native plants for your yard. Check your clothing and car for noxious weed "hitchhiker seeds" and get rid of them before you travel. Make sure to check your shoes! With these simple steps, you can help protect Nevada from the harmful effects of noxious weeds.

# Parts of a Plant

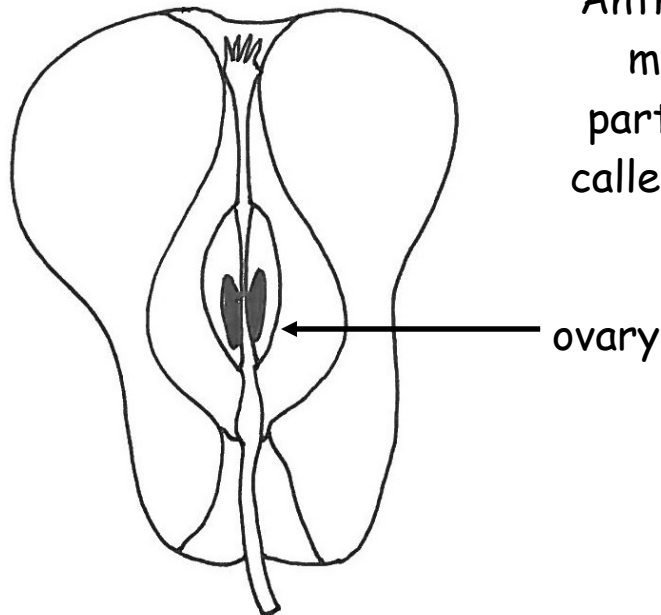


## Parts of a simple flower



Stigma + style + ovary makes the female part of the plant, called the **pistil**.

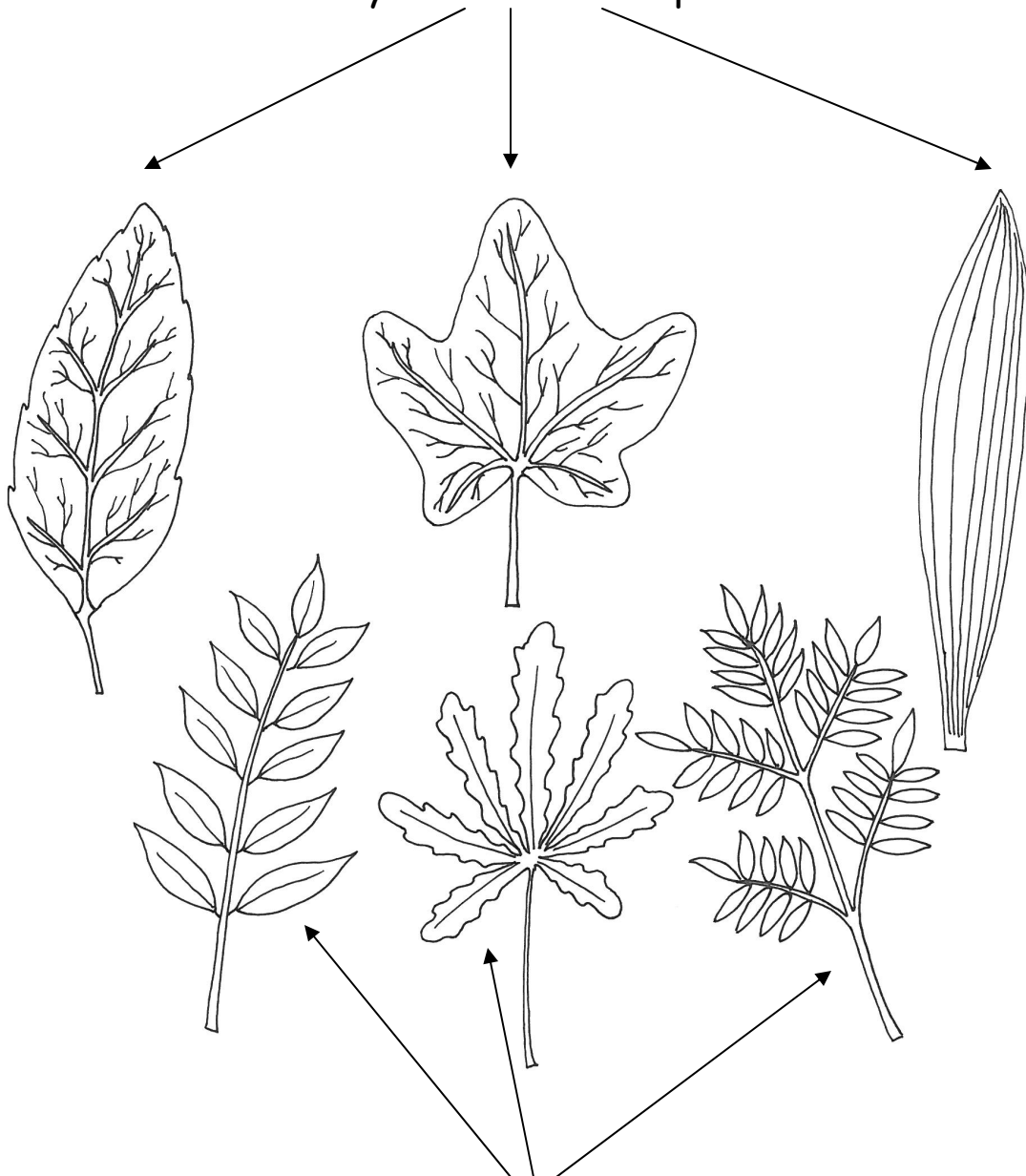
Anther + filament makes the male part of the plant, called the **stamen**.



Did you know? A flower can become a tasty fruit or a nasty weed seed, depending on the type of plant!

Leaves come in many shapes. The shape of the leaf can help you decide what type of plant it is.

These leaves are called **simple leaves** because they have one main part.

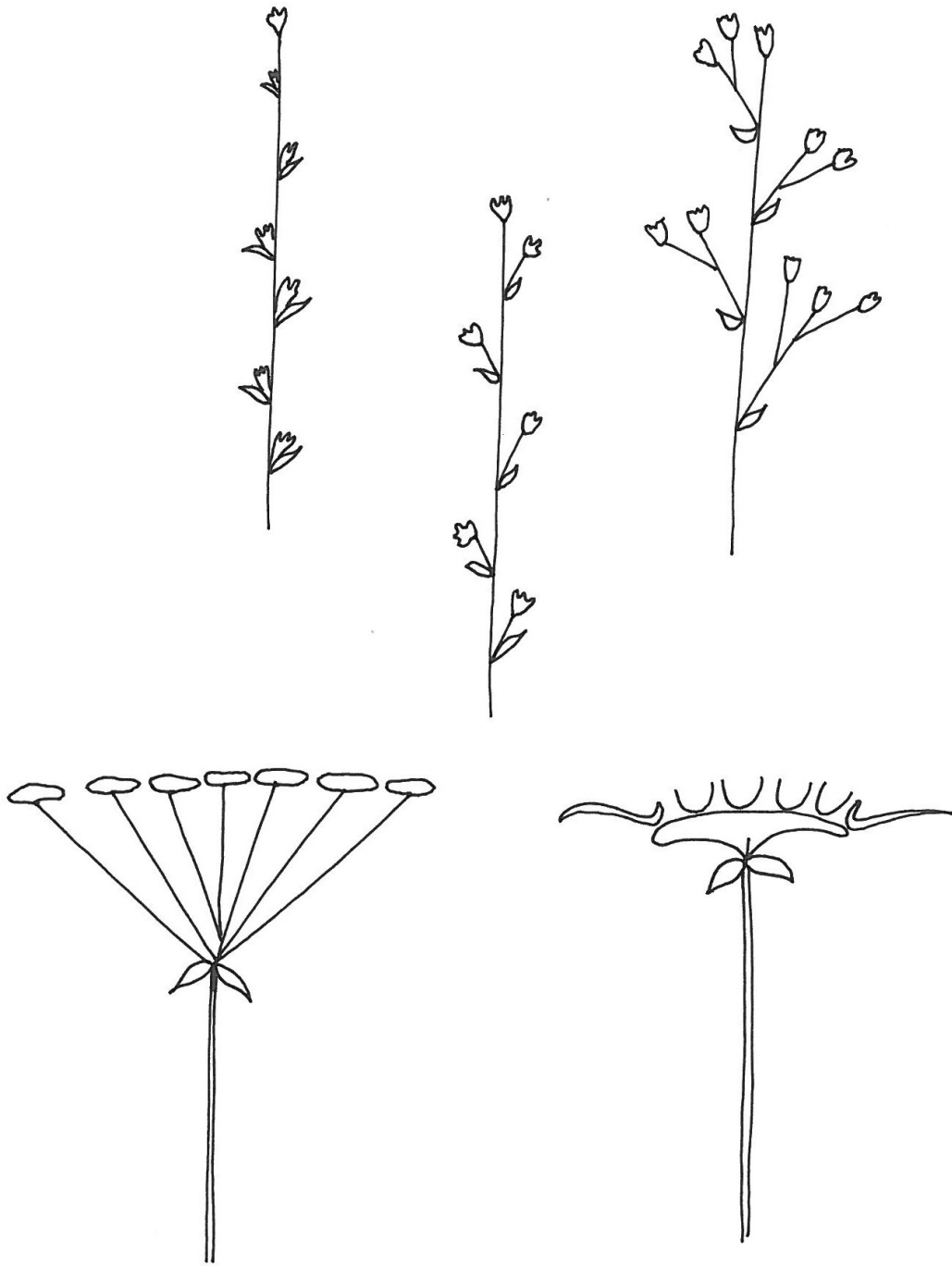


These leaves are **compound leaves**. They have many small parts.

Draw a simple leaf.

Draw a compound leaf.

Which kind of leaf looks like your hand?



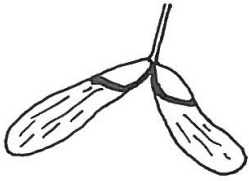
Clusters of flowers may have many different shapes and colors. The type of clusters can help you decide which plant it is. Some form a shape like an umbrella. Others look like spikes. Which flower looks like an umbrella?



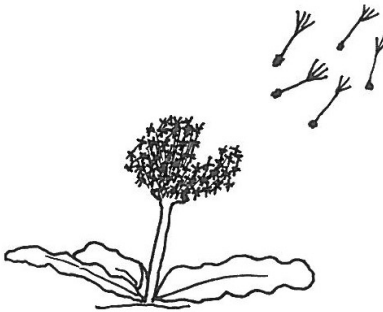
## How Do Weed Seeds Spread?



Hitchhikers hang onto socks, sneakers, tires, or animal's coats. The seeds have stickers or barbs on them. This is how puncturevine seeds spread.



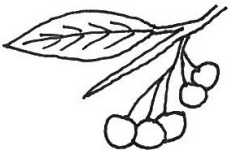
Spinners such as maple seeds whirl in the wind. Some of these seeds have traveled as far as 32 miles on a windy day.



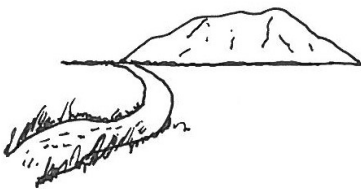
Drifters float on the wind, such as the downy seeds from dandelions and musk thistle.



Nuts are picked up and stockpiled by animals.



Hide-n-seekers are hidden inside fruits and other foods or in construction fill dirt. Perennial pepperweed and many other weeds spread this way.



Water travelers such as purple loosestrife and saltcedar seeds drift downstream with flowing water. Seeds or parts of roots float away from their parent plants.

Now you're ready to learn about some of Nevada's problem weeds! Color the pictures while you read about them. There are pictures for all the noxious weeds named below.

Medusahead

Yellow starthistle

Musk thistle

Knapweeds

Puncturevine

Purple loosestrife

Eurasian watermilfoil

Western waterhemlock

Poison hemlock

Dyer's woad

Rush skeletonweed

Hoary cress

Leafy spurge

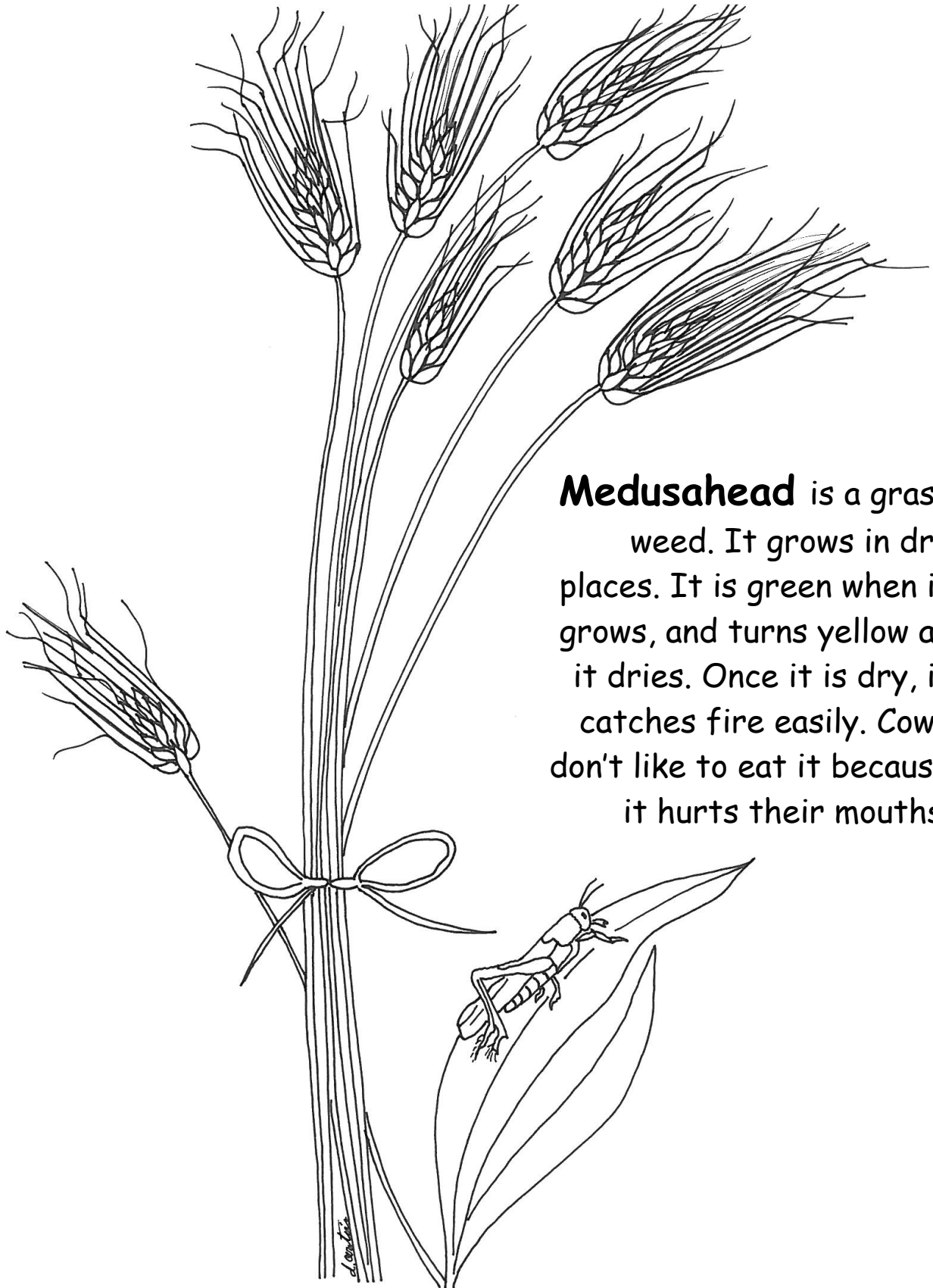
Dalmatian toadflax

Perennial pepperweed (also called tall whitetop)

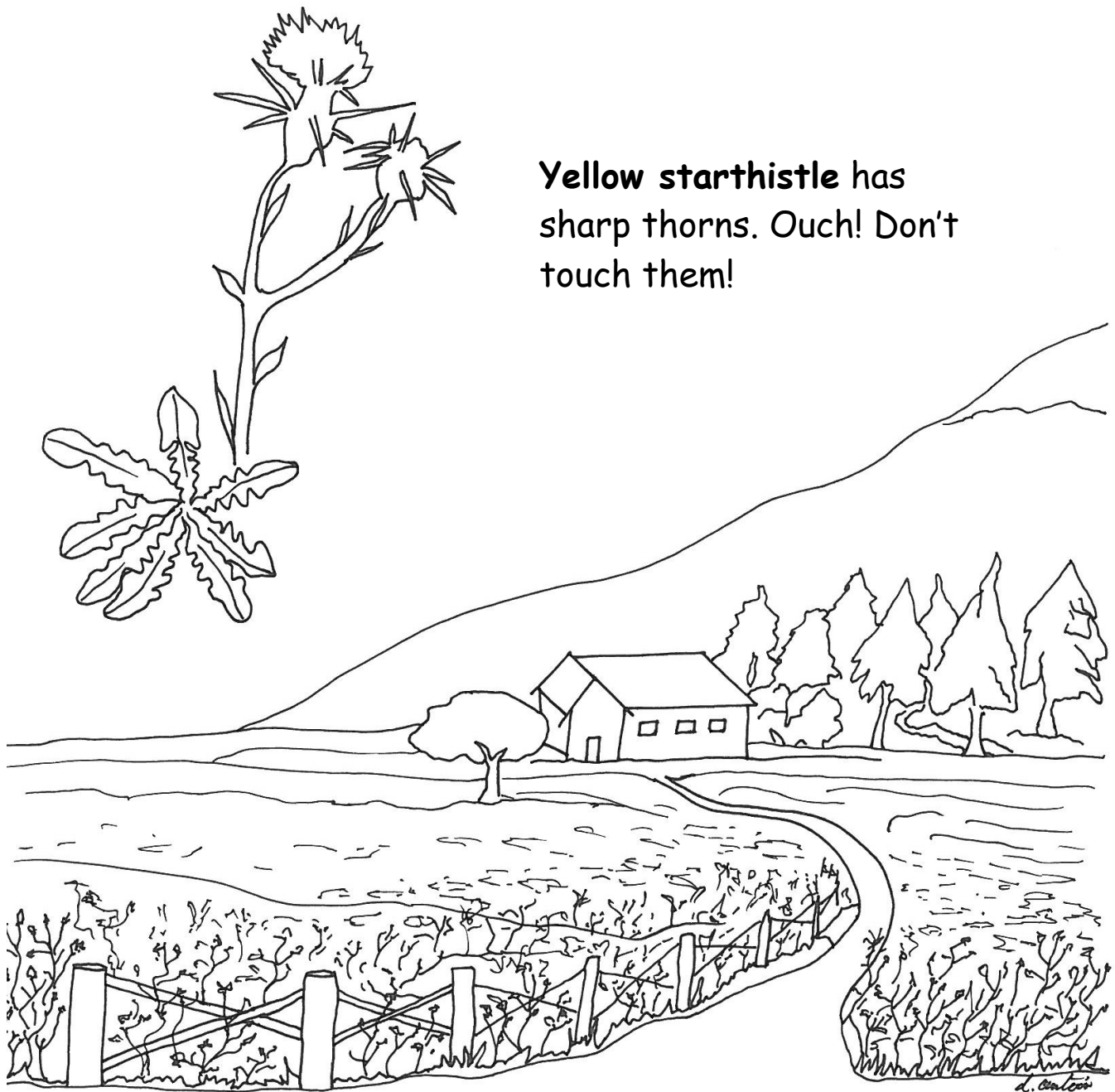
Scotch thistle

Saltcedar

Canada thistle



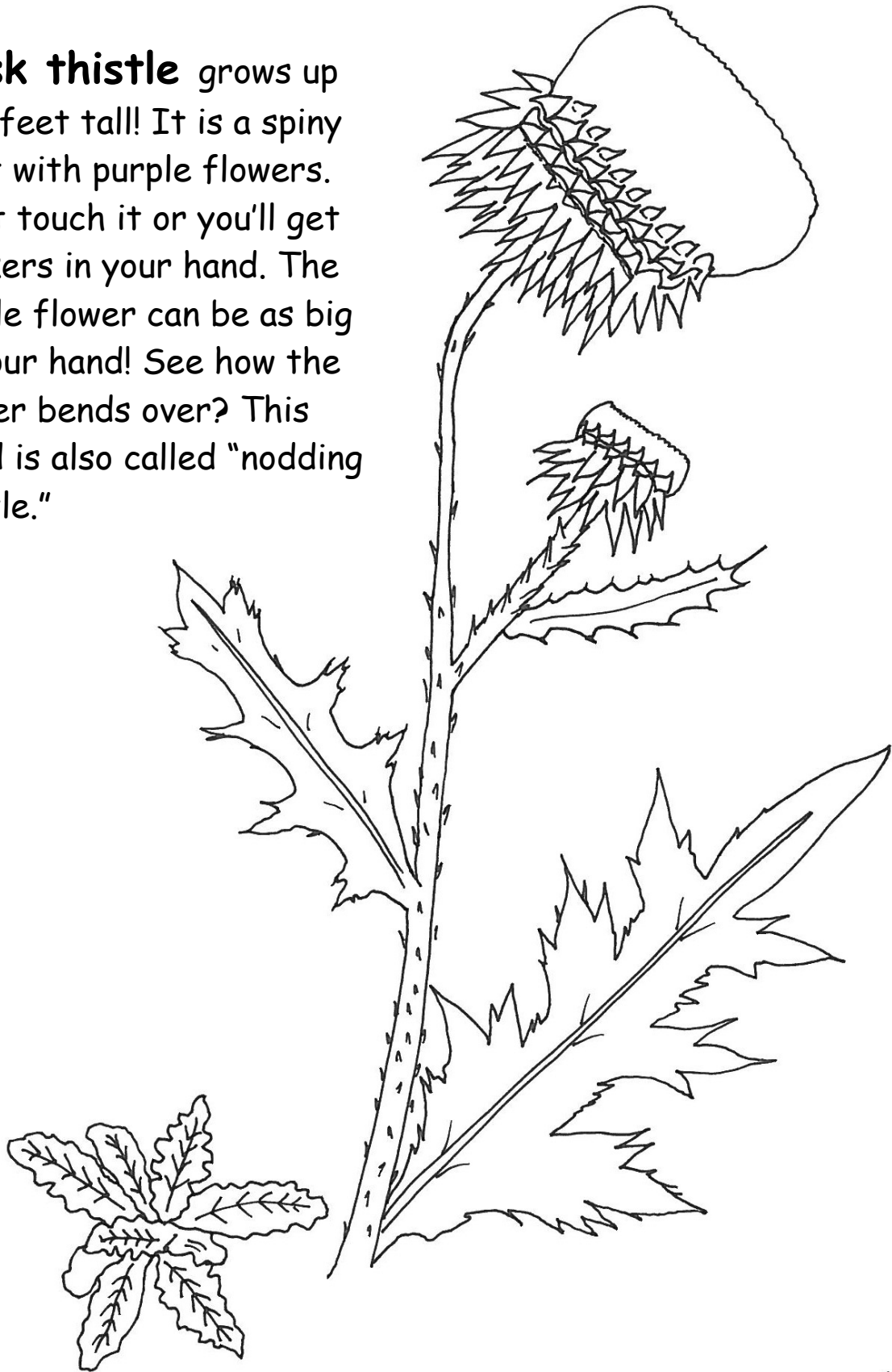
**Medusahead** is a grass weed. It grows in dry places. It is green when it grows, and turns yellow as it dries. Once it is dry, it catches fire easily. Cows don't like to eat it because it hurts their mouths.



**Yellow starthistle** has sharp thorns. Ouch! Don't touch them!

**Yellow starthistle** comes from southern Europe. It probably got here in soil carried on ships. This nasty weed can easily take over your yard. Yellow starthistle crowds out our native plants that animals depend on for food. It has sharp spines that can hurt people and animals. Like its name, the flowers are yellow.

**Musk thistle** grows up to 6 feet tall! It is a spiny plant with purple flowers. Don't touch it or you'll get stickers in your hand. The purple flower can be as big as your hand! See how the flower bends over? This weed is also called "nodding thistle."

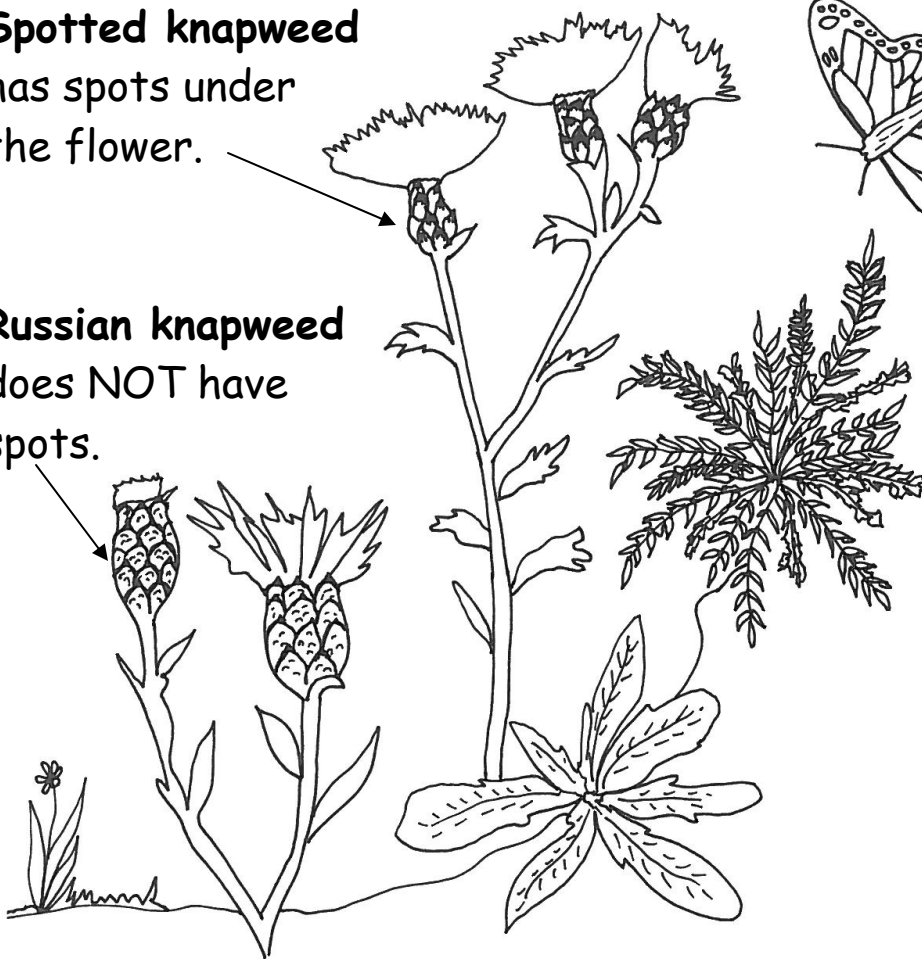
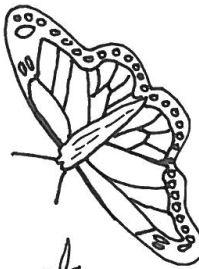


*d. canton*

**Spotted knapweed**  
has spots under  
the flower.

**Russian knapweed**  
does NOT have  
spots.

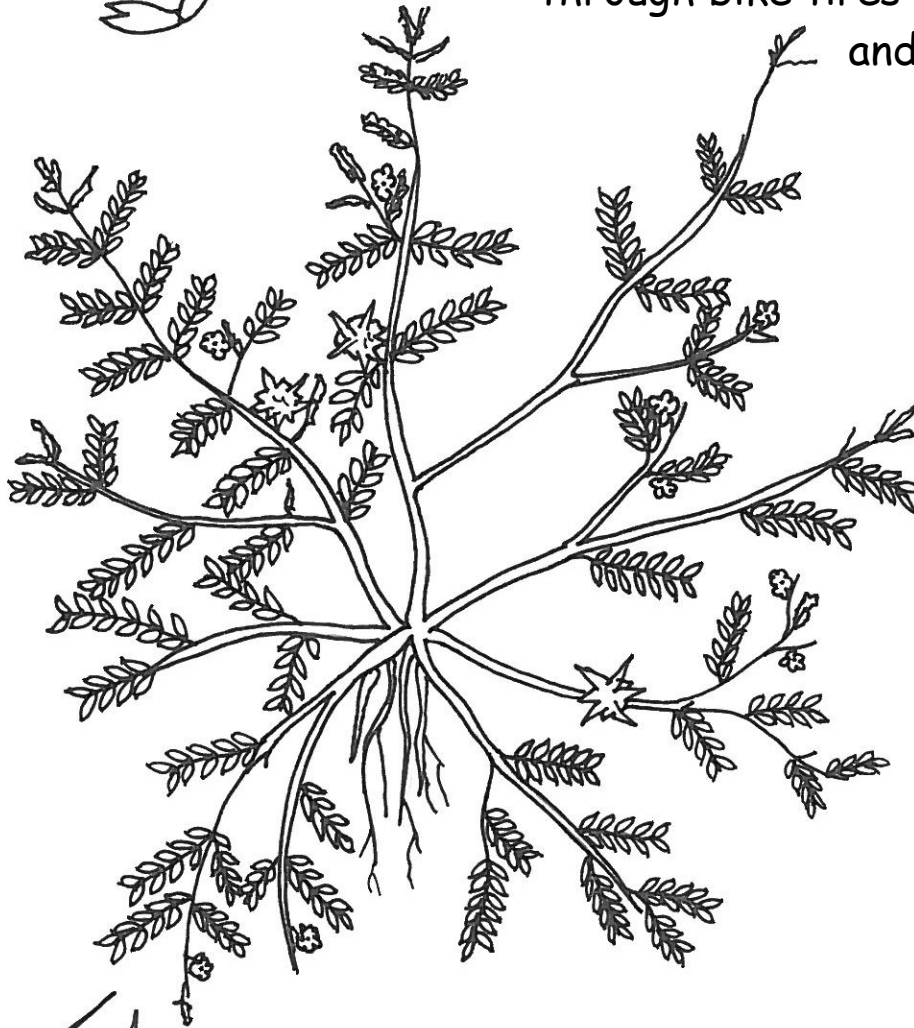
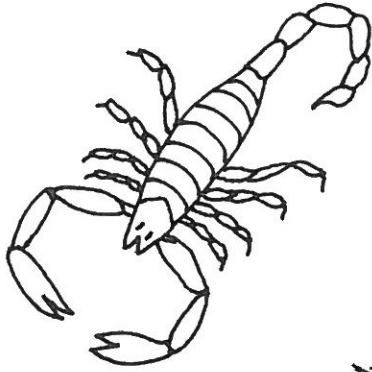
**Knapweeds** have  
pink, purple, or  
white flowers.  
They grow in dry  
places and take  
over fast. Animals  
don't like their  
taste.



**Diffuse knapweed** has  
stickers, and the flowers  
are pale pink or white.



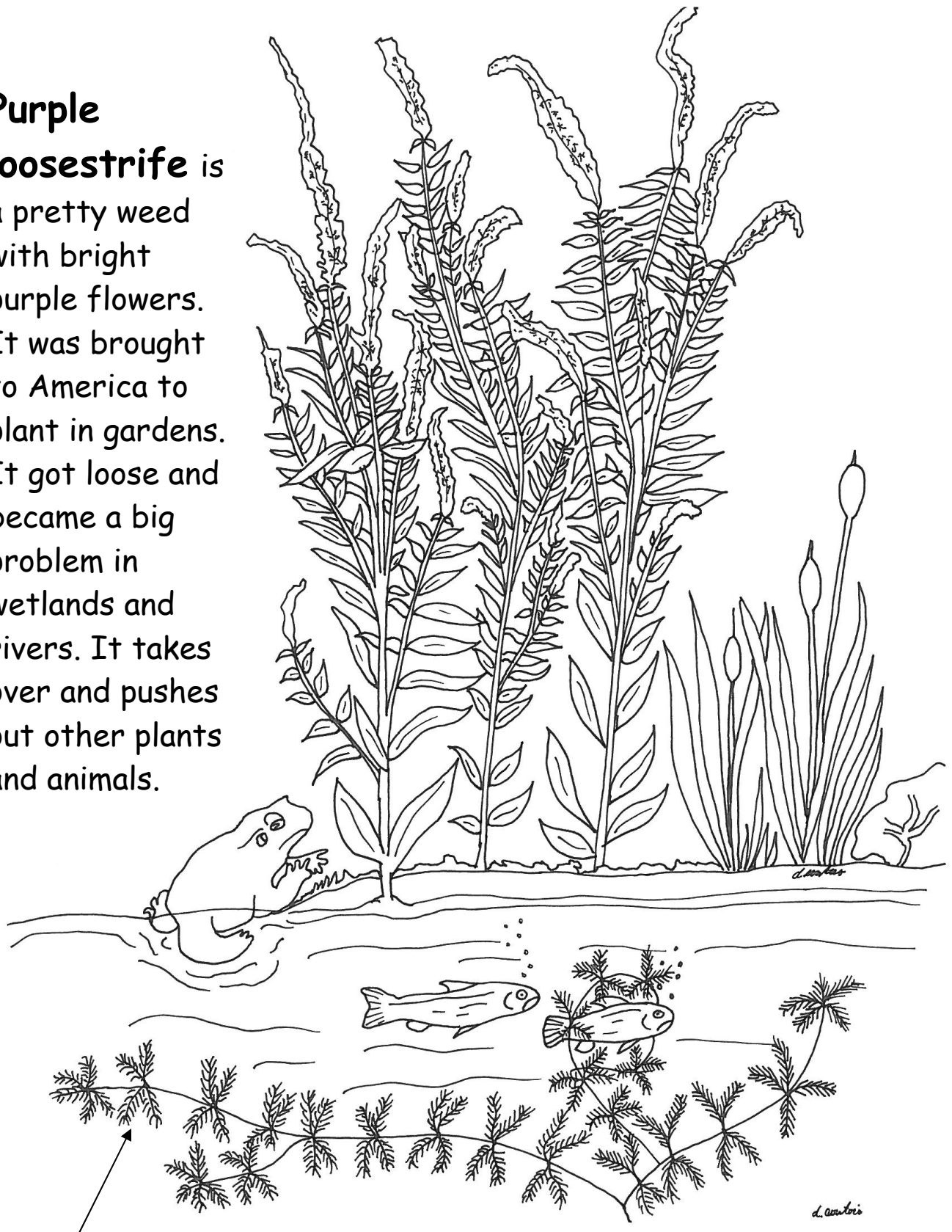
**Puncturevine** is another nasty weed. It grows close to the ground and hides its tiny yellow flowers. But if you step on a seed, you will know it! The seeds can push through bike tires and shoes and hurt you.



Some people think the seed parts look like goatheads. They are big and sharp.

*d. curtis*

**Purple loosestrife** is a pretty weed with bright purple flowers. It was brought to America to plant in gardens. It got loose and became a big problem in wetlands and rivers. It takes over and pushes out other plants and animals.



**Eurasian watermilfoil** grows in the water. It crowds out good plants and makes it hard for fish to live.



## Western waterhemlock is

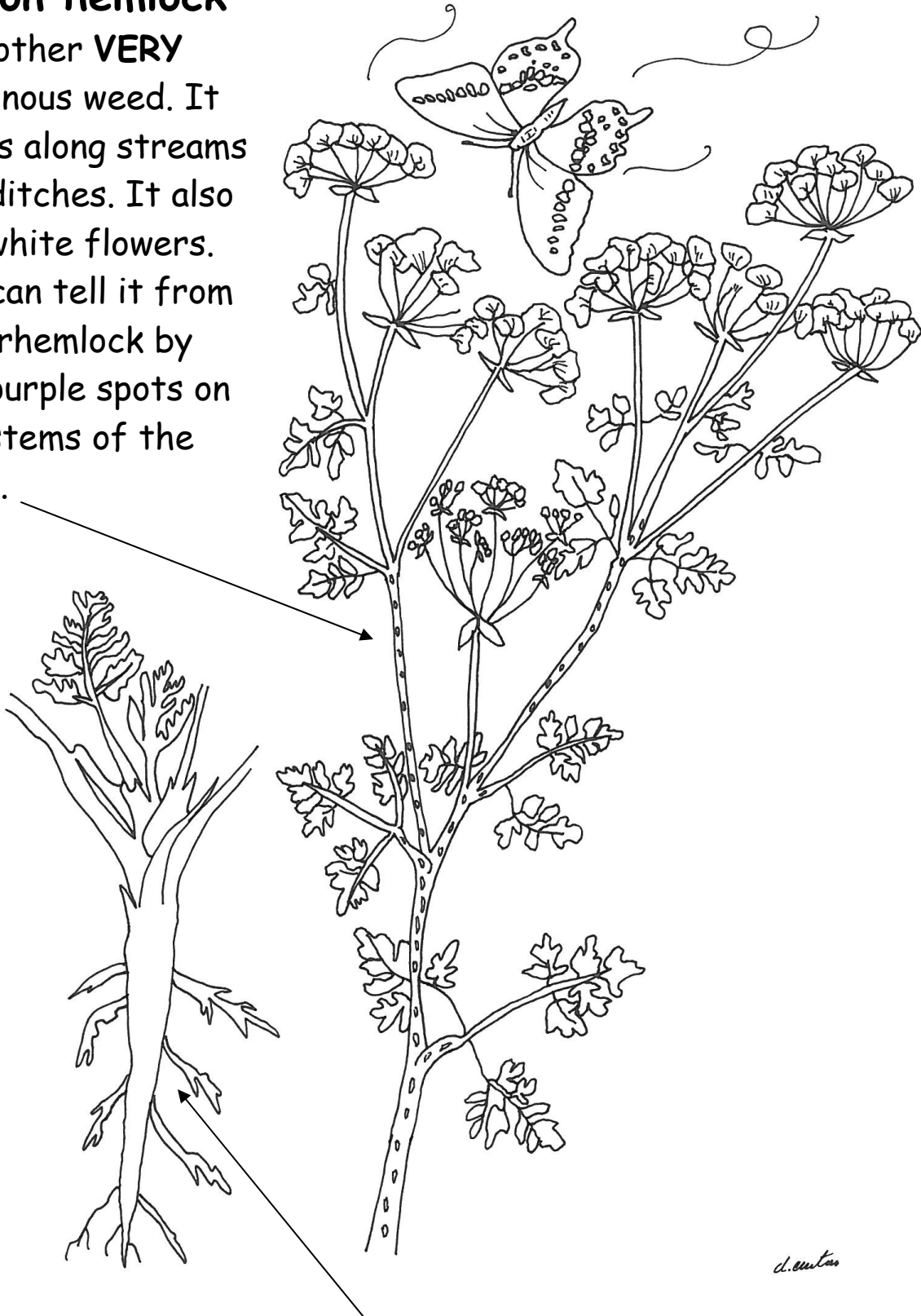
a tall plant. It has bright green leaves and white flowers.



**Waterhemlock** grows in wet places. It is **VERY** poisonous. Do not ever touch this plant or dig up the roots! Tell your parents if you think you have seen it.

## Poison hemlock

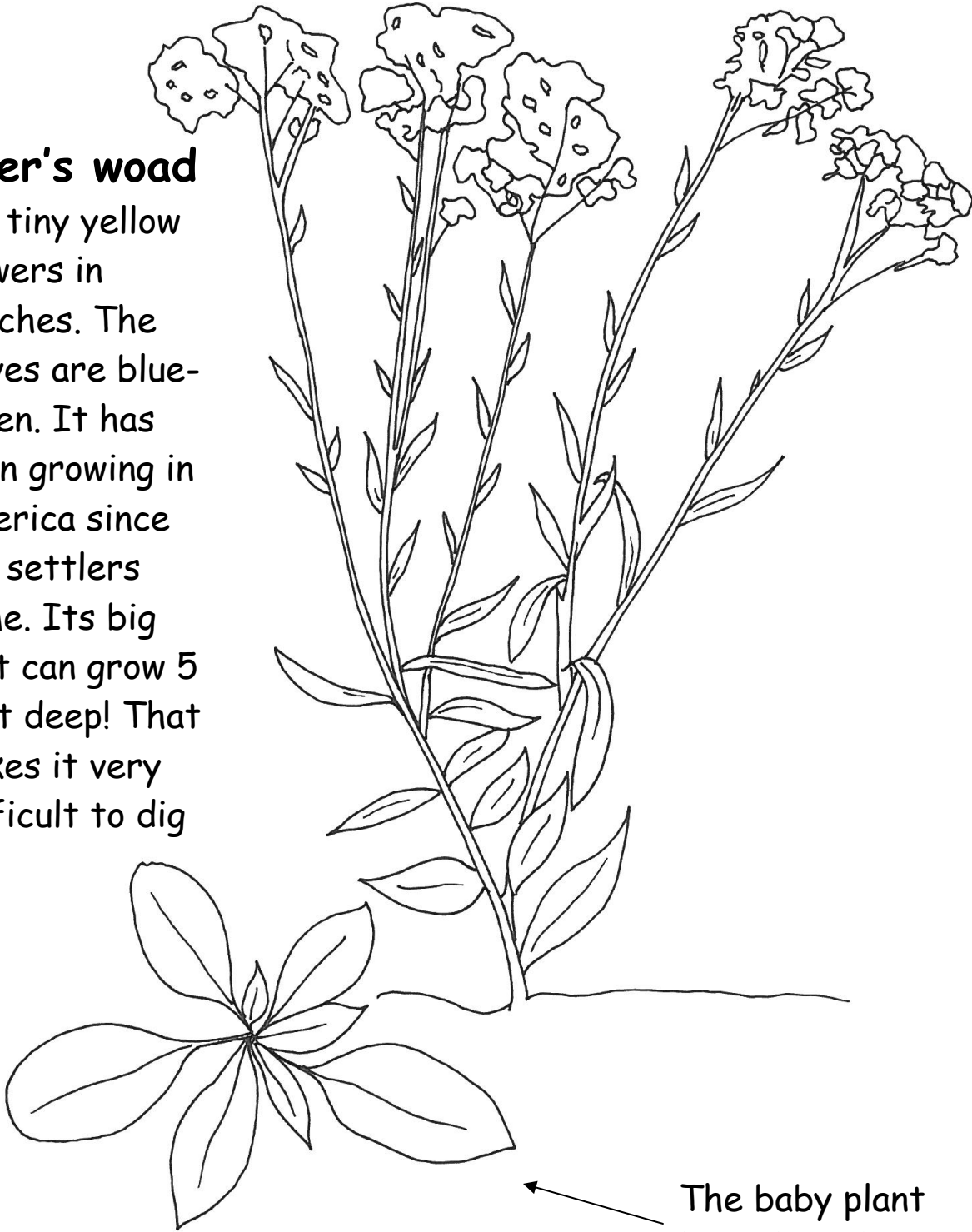
is another **VERY** poisonous weed. It grows along streams and ditches. It also has white flowers. You can tell it from waterhemlock by the purple spots on the stems of the plant.



Some people think the big root looks like a vegetable. Never eat or touch any part of this plant. They are all poisonous!

## Dyer's woad

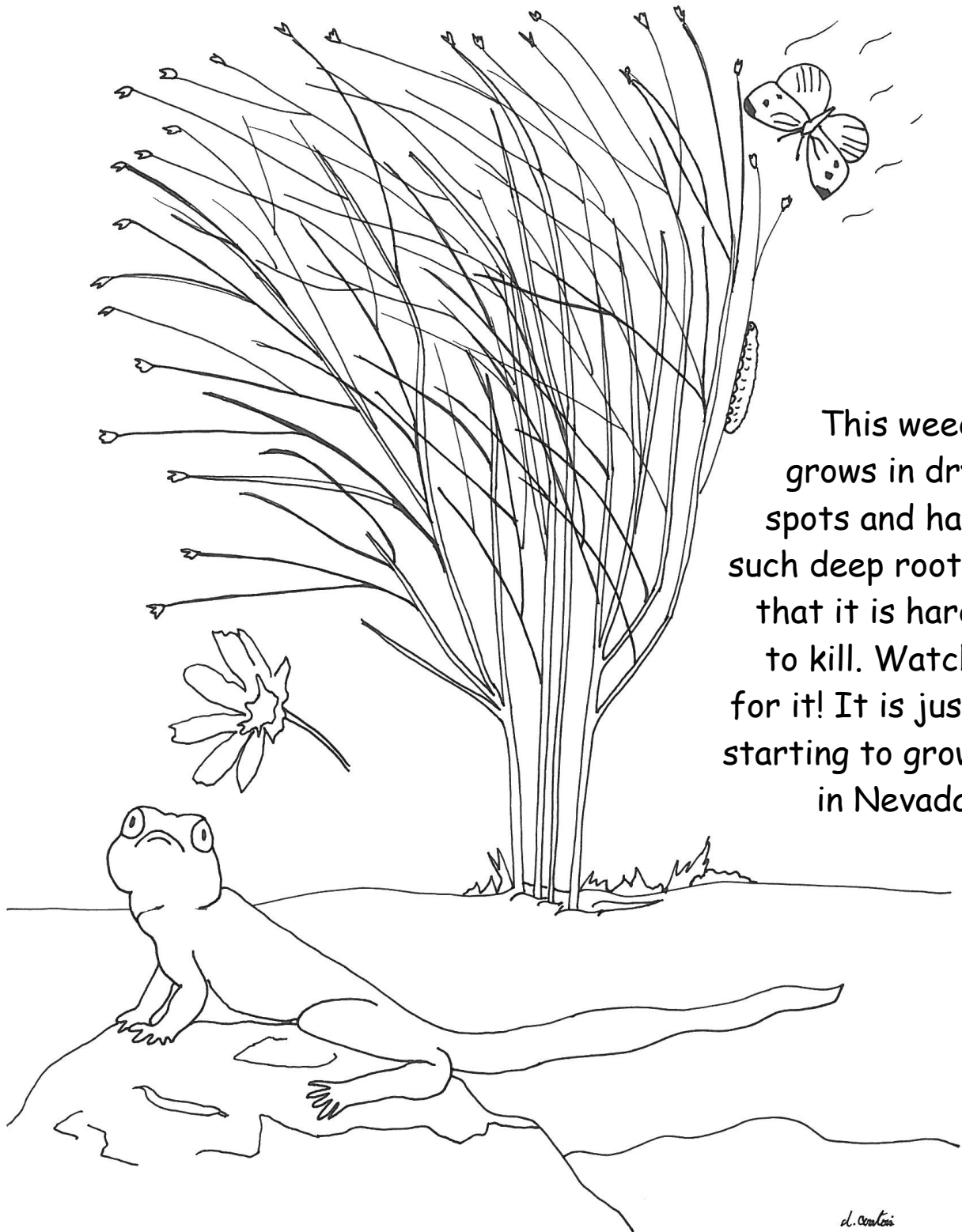
has tiny yellow flowers in bunches. The leaves are blue-green. It has been growing in America since the settlers came. Its big root can grow 5 feet deep! That makes it very difficult to dig out.



The baby plant looks like this.

*d. scutellaria*

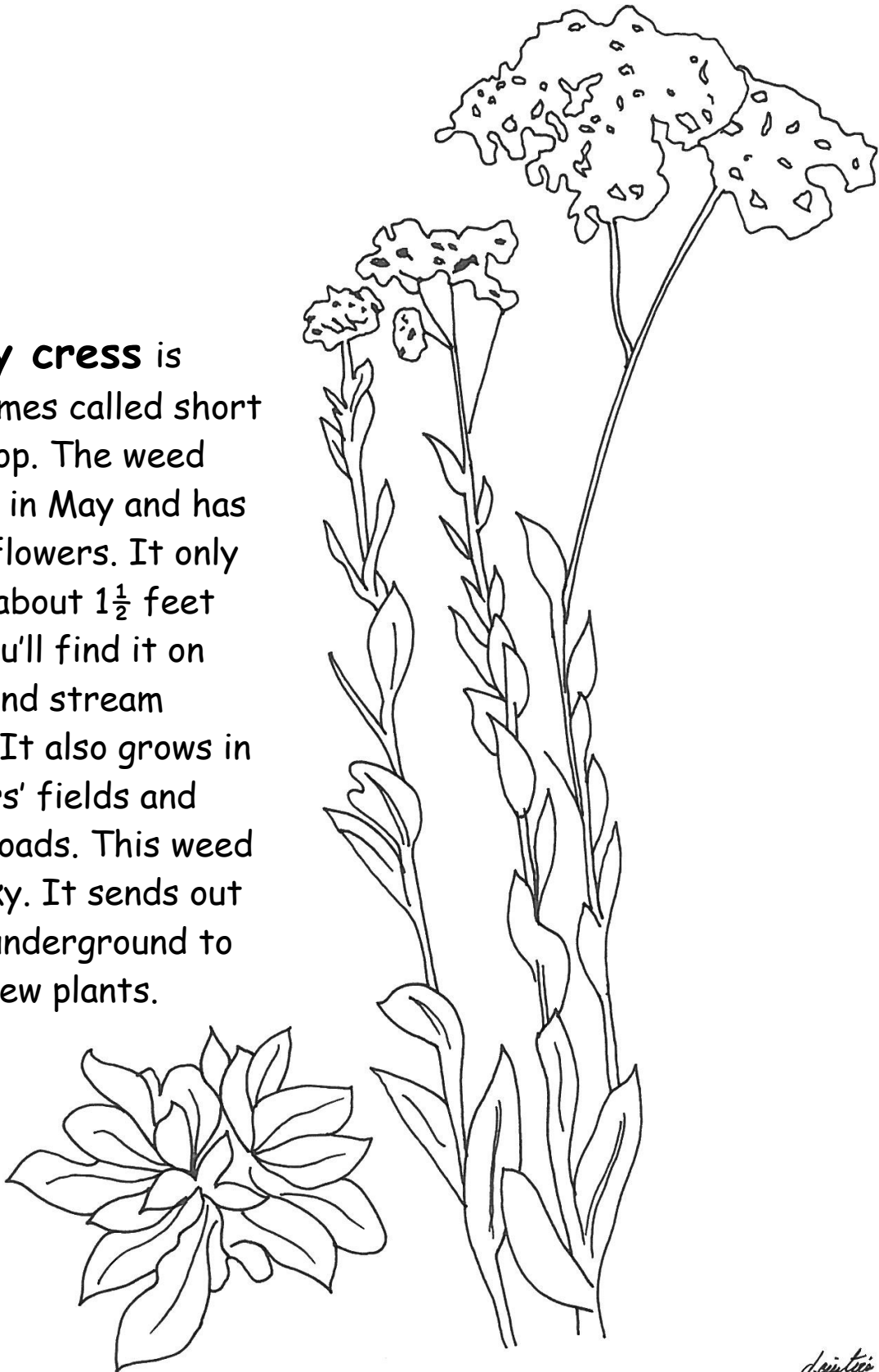
**Rush skeletonweed** looks like a skeleton of a plant, but it's not. It can grow as tall as 4 feet, and has such tiny leaves that they are difficult to see. The flower is yellow.



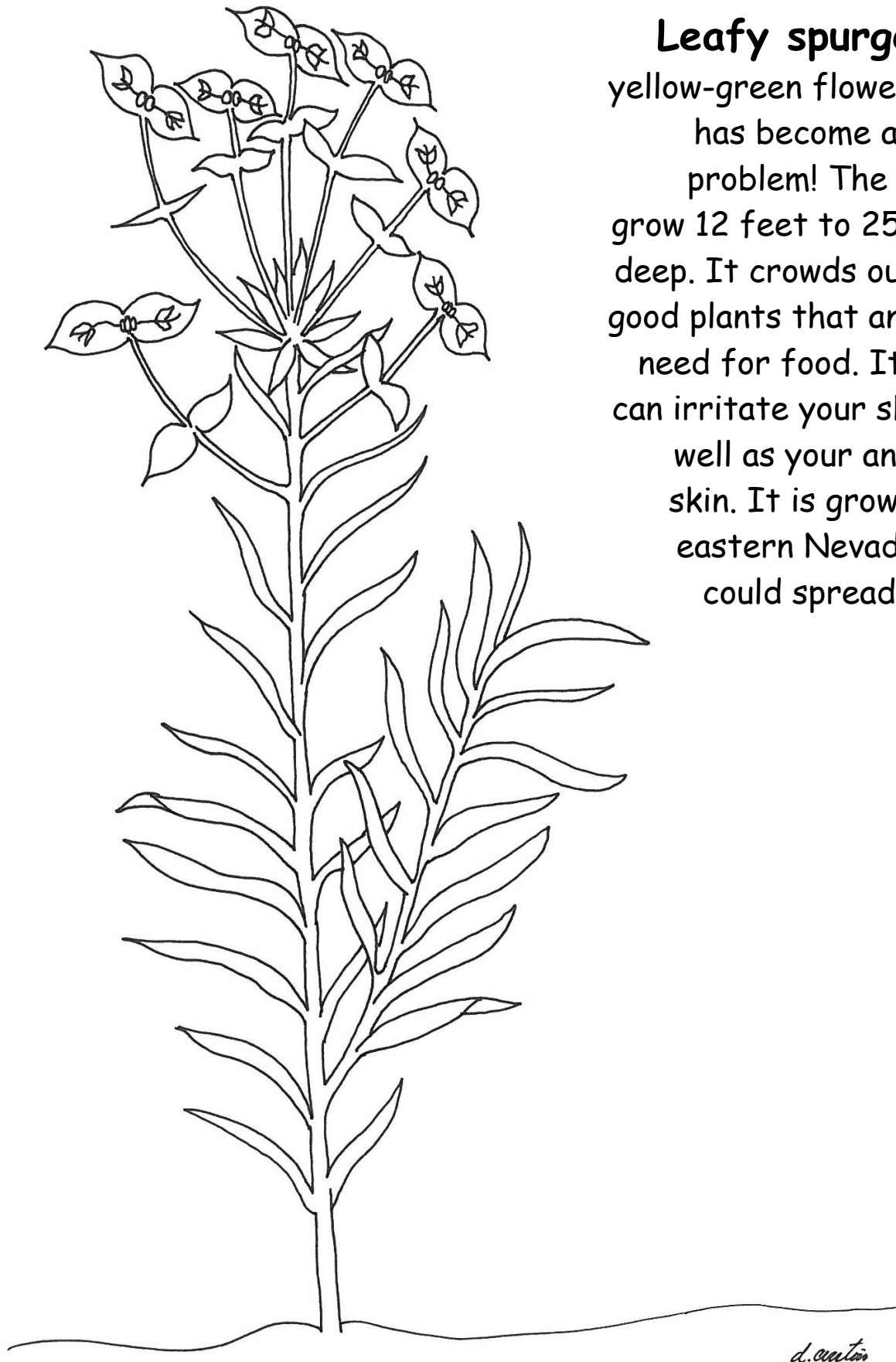
This weed grows in dry spots and has such deep roots that it is hard to kill. Watch for it! It is just starting to grow in Nevada.

*d. carter*

**Hoary cress** is sometimes called short whitetop. The weed blooms in May and has white flowers. It only grows about 1½ feet tall. You'll find it on ditch and stream banks. It also grows in farmers' fields and along roads. This weed is tricky. It sends out roots underground to make new plants.



*denton*



**Leafy spurge** has yellow-green flowers. It has become a huge problem! The roots grow 12 feet to 25 feet deep. It crowds out the good plants that animals need for food. Its sap can irritate your skin as well as your animal's skin. It is growing in eastern Nevada but could spread fast.

**Dalmatian toadflax** doesn't look like the black and white dog! It has yellow flowers that look like snapdragons. People planted it in their gardens. This was a big mistake. Toadflax has a deep root system. It crowds out the good plants in pastures and along roads.

This is the flower.

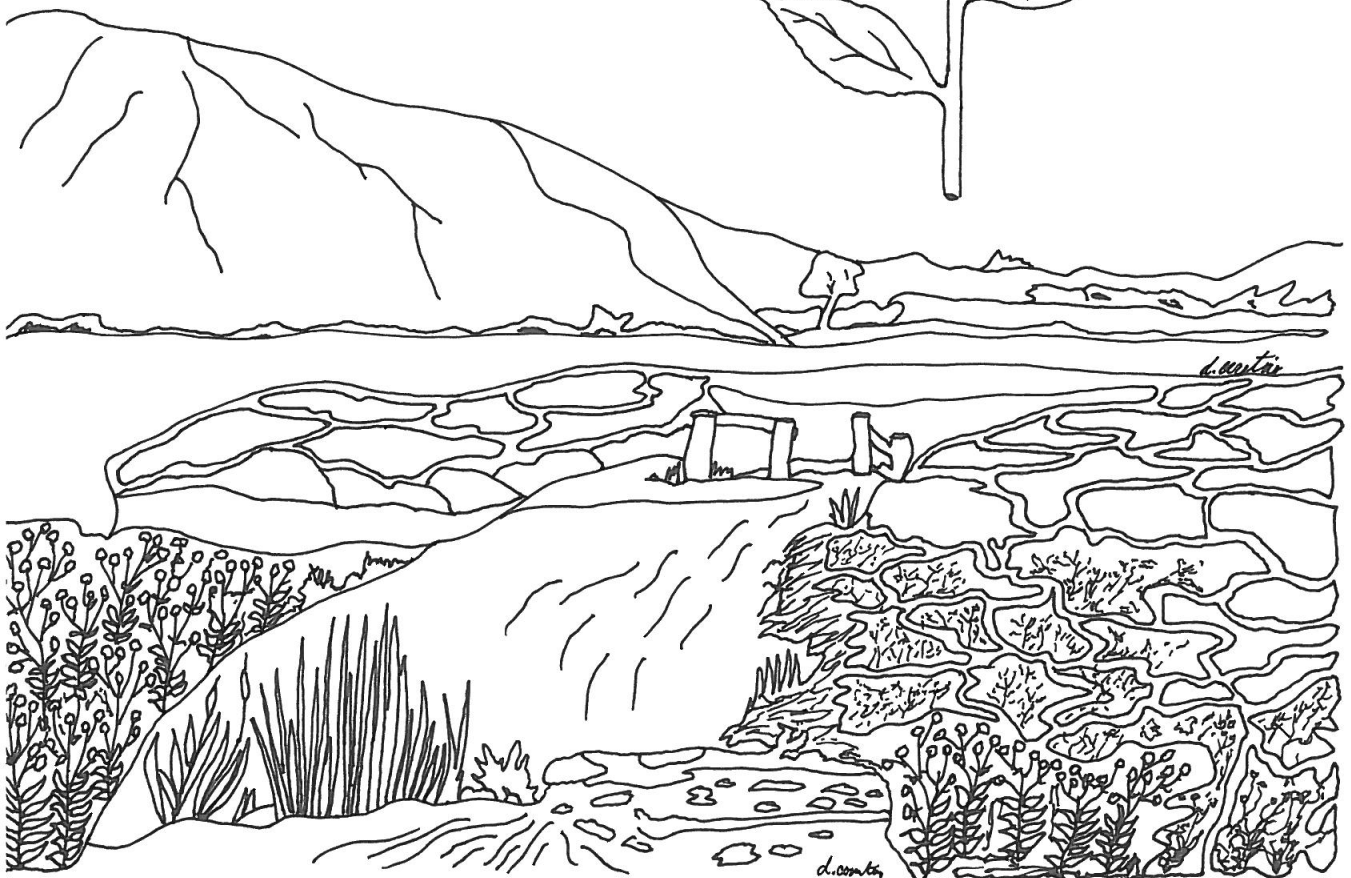
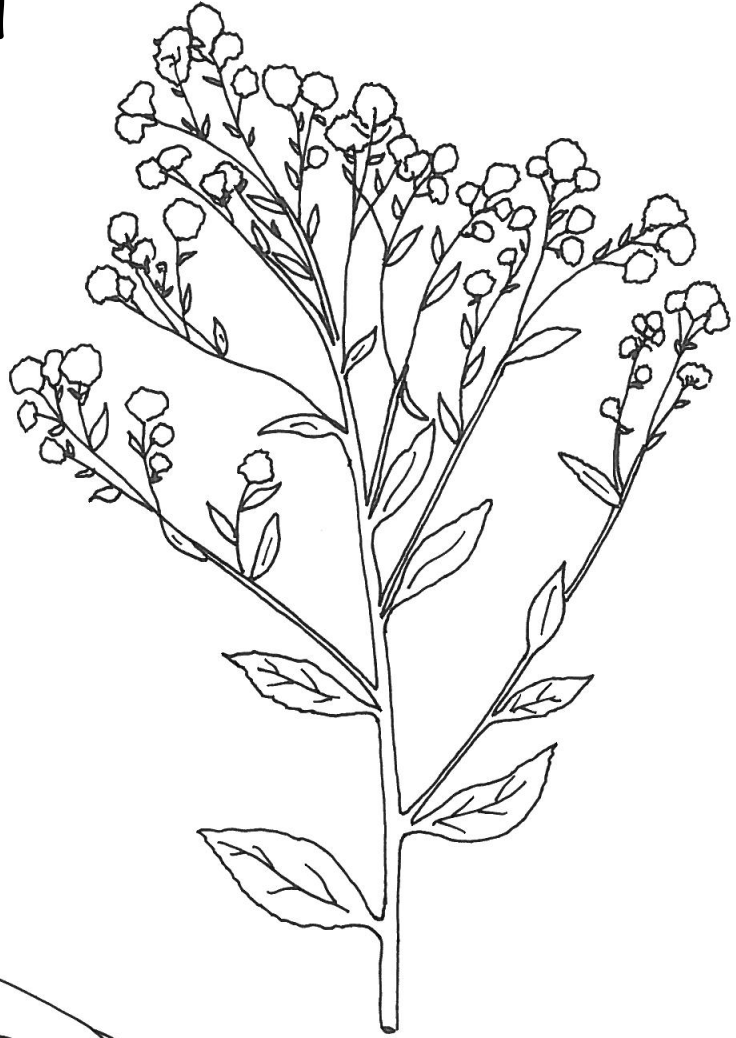


This is the baby plant.



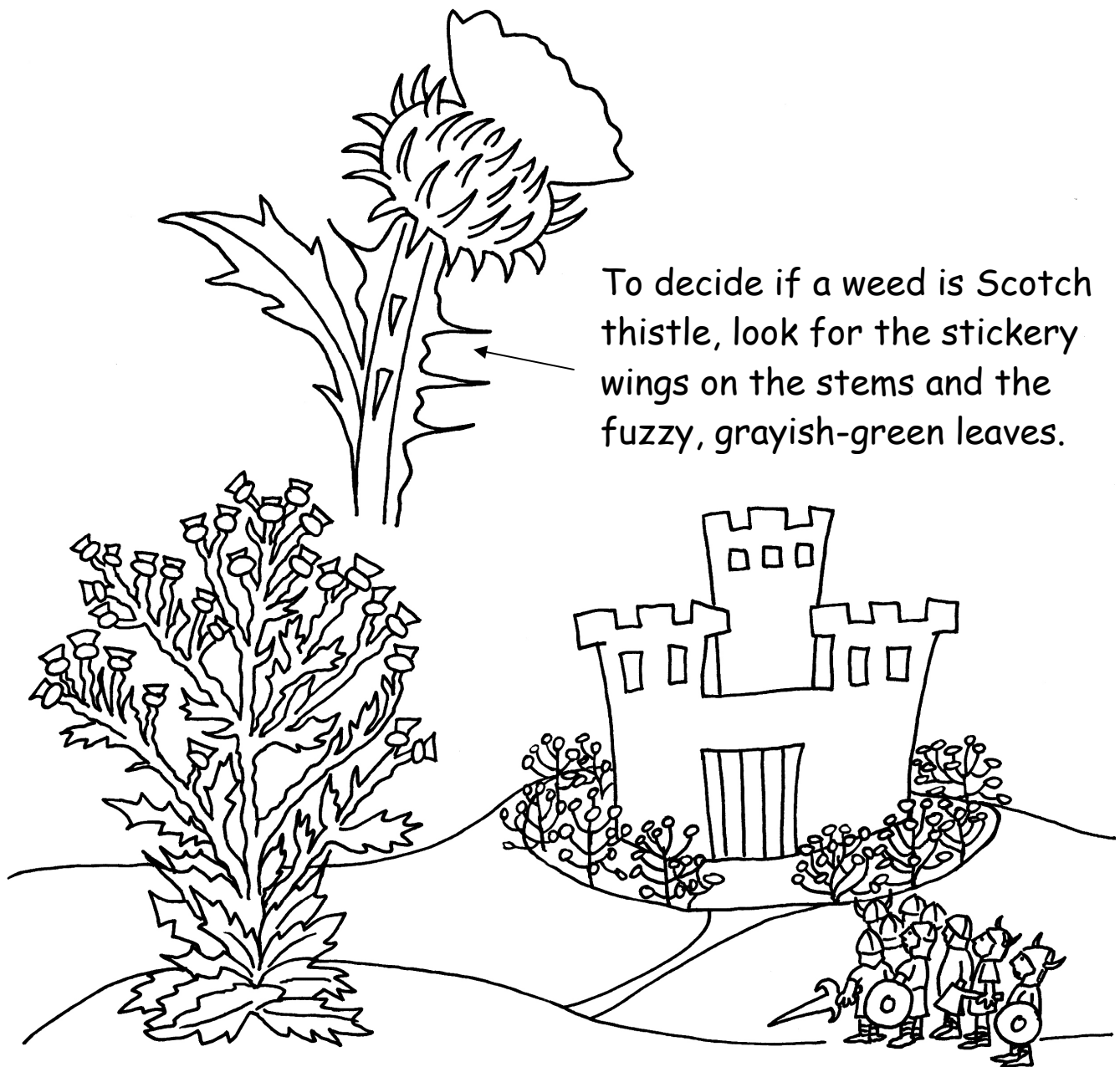
## Perennial pepperweed

(tall whitetop) is a big problem in Nevada. It is growing like crazy along all our rivers. It grows so fast and so thick that the other plants die. It can grow up to 7 feet tall! It flowers in June and has lots of tiny white blooms.





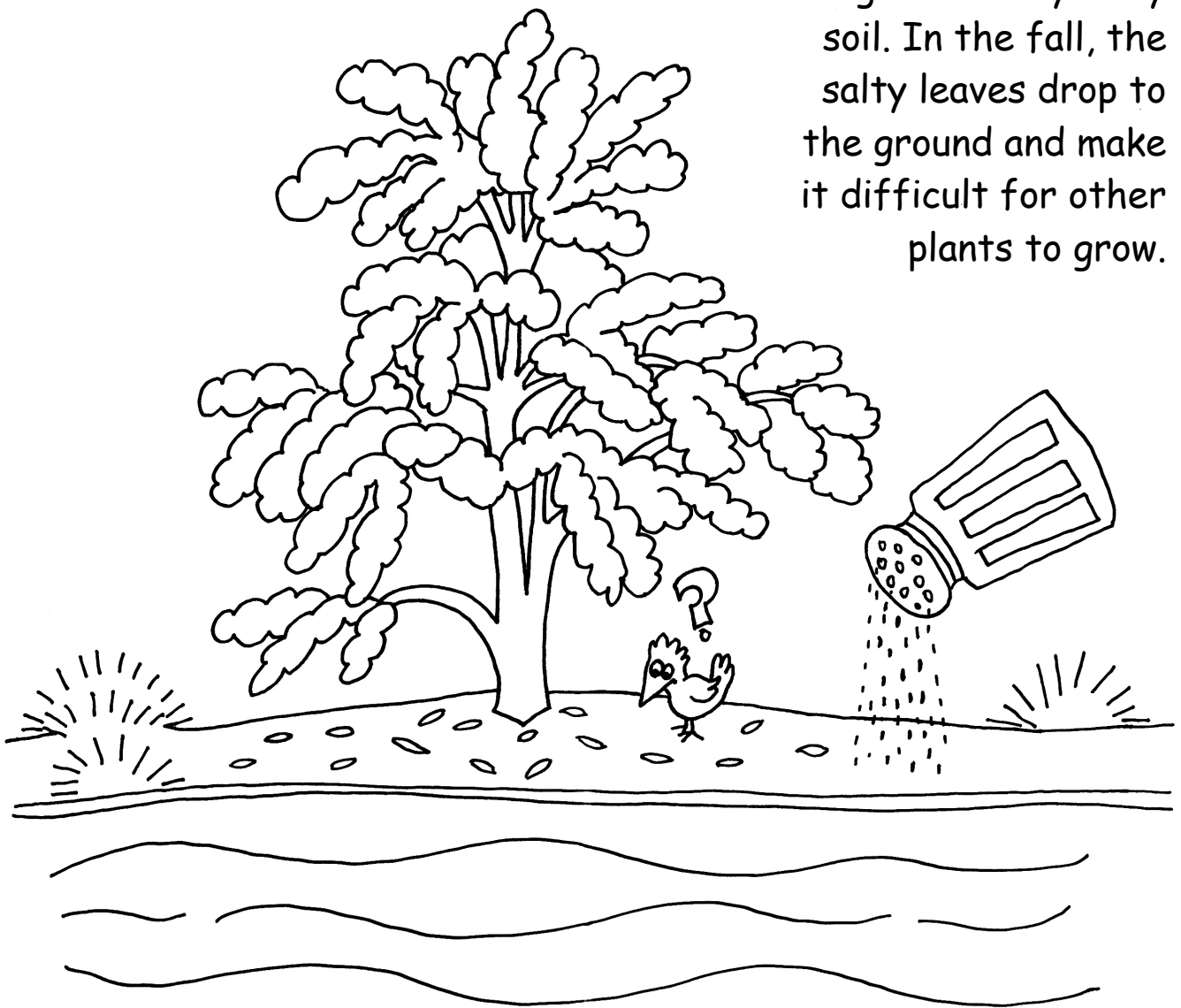
**Scotch thistle** is a huge, prickly weed that can grow 8 feet to 12 feet tall. It has fuzzy, grayish-green leaves and purple flowers. Long ago, it was planted in the dry moats around castles to keep out invaders. It grows along roads and in other dry places.

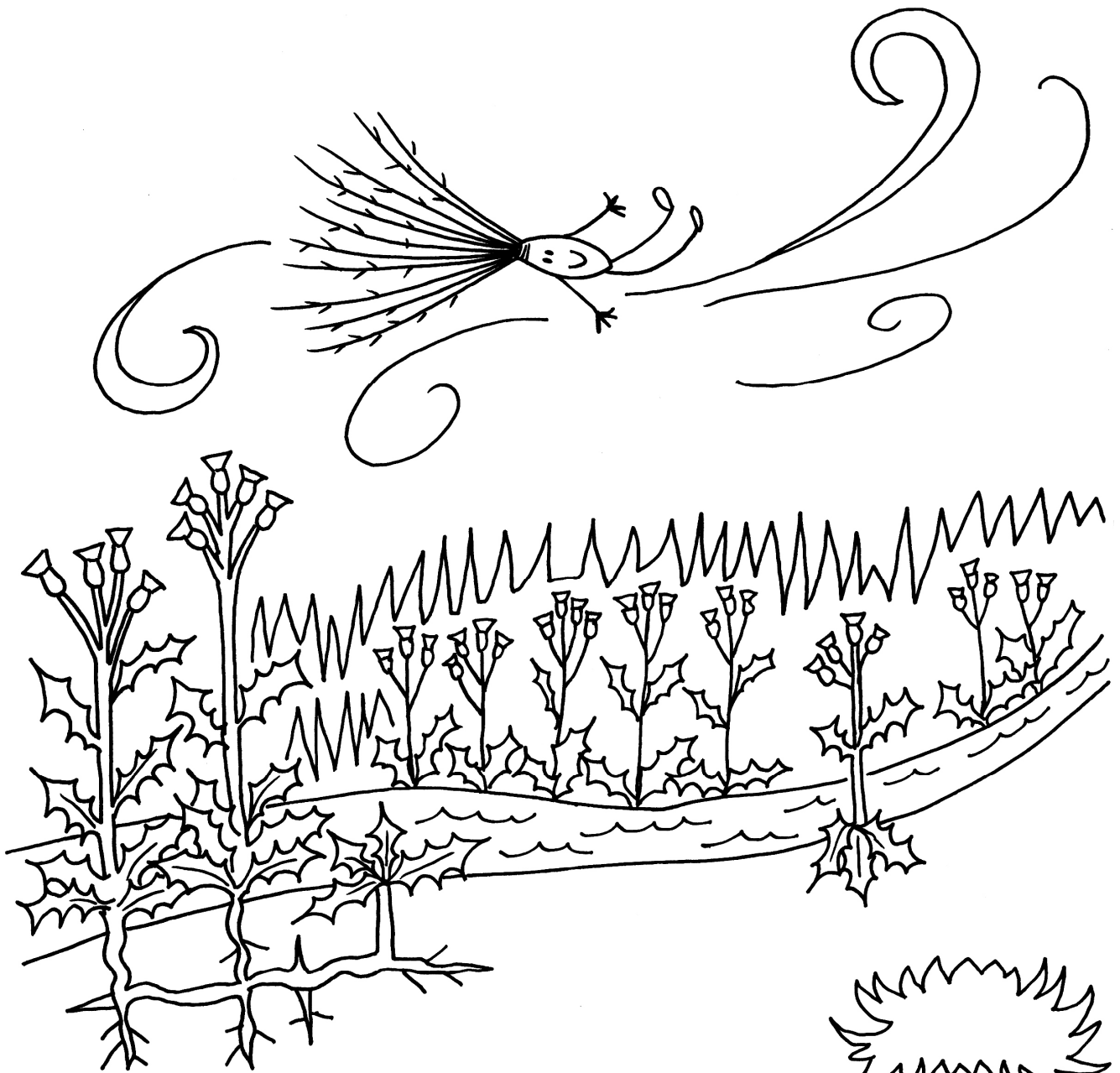


To decide if a weed is Scotch thistle, look for the sticky wings on the stems and the fuzzy, grayish-green leaves.

**Saltcedar** is a water hog. This small tree grows along rivers and streams and can use hundreds of gallons of water each day! In the spring, it makes lots of tiny pink flowers.

This weed is called saltcedar because it can grow in very salty soil. In the fall, the salty leaves drop to the ground and make it difficult for other plants to grow.





**Canada thistle** is a nasty, sticky weed. It is spreading in pastures and along rivers. The flowers are usually pink or whitish. The seeds are hairy and float on the wind. It is very hard to kill because it spreads from the roots.



This is the flower.

Look through your activity book. How many can you find?

Butterflies \_\_\_\_\_

Frogs \_\_\_\_\_

Lizards \_\_\_\_\_

Caterpillars \_\_\_\_\_

Fish \_\_\_\_\_

Ants \_\_\_\_\_

Scorpions \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think these animals would rather live near noxious weeds or native plants?

Which weeds are growing near water?

Which weeds might grow in a dry place?

How many weeds can you count that have pink or purple flowers?  
Can you name them?

How many weeds can you count that have white flowers? Can you name them?

How many weeds can you count that have yellow flowers? Can you name them?

# Fill In the Blanks to Spell "Noxious Weeds"

D \_ \_ M \_ T \_ \_ N \_ \_ A D \_ L \_ \_

P O \_ \_ O \_ \_ E \_ \_ O \_ \_

X

\_ \_ R \_ \_ N I \_ \_ \_ E P \_ \_ R \_ E \_ \_

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\_ N \_ \_ W \_ \_ D \_

\_ E \_ F \_ \_ P \_ \_ G \_

P \_ \_ \_ \_ E \_ \_ O \_ \_ S \_ \_ \_ F \_

\_ \_ D \_ S \_ \_ E \_ D

\_ A \_ A \_ I S \_

## What Do I Do If I Find a Noxious Weed?

Now that you know what some noxious weeds look like, you may find them in your neighborhood - or even in your own yard. Oh no! What do you do now?

The most important thing to do is to tell your parents or another adult right away. They can help you pull up a weed. Try to get as much of the plant as you can. Put it in a paper bag and take it to your local Cooperative Extension office. There is a list of offices on the last page of your activity book.

Don't let the weed sit in the hot sun or the car, or it will turn into a crispy critter! Bring in a nice, fresh plant.

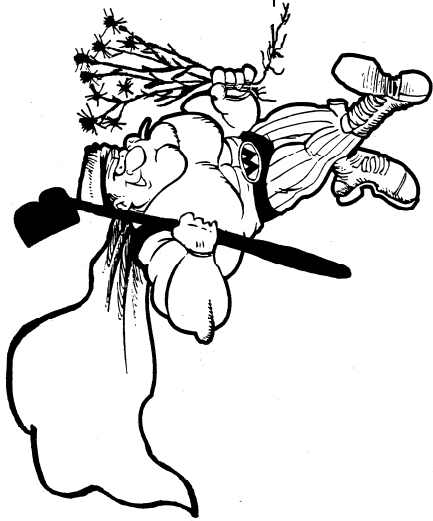
At the Cooperative Extension office, workers will tell you the name of the weed. They will also tell you what to do about it.

You and your parents can help by getting rid of problem weeds right away. Your 4-H club, Girl or Boy Scout Troop, or other club can help by volunteering to pull noxious weeds. Join the war on weeds and become a Weedbuster!

# What Can My Family Do to Stop the Spread of Weeds?

It takes everyone to beat noxious weeds. There are many ways you and your family can help stop their spread. Read this page with your parents so they can become Weedbusters!

- 👍 Drive only on established roads and trails away from weed-infested areas.
- 👍 Never camp or drive in weed infested areas.
- 👍 When riding horses in the back country, carry only feed that is certified weed free, and feed them only certified food for 96 hours before entering back country.
- 👍 Remove weed seeds from horses or pack animals by rushing them well and cleaning their hooves before entering weed-free areas.
- 👍 Don't pick the flowers of noxious weeds and take them home.
- 👍 Don't pick and transport wild flowers that you can't identify.
- 👍 If you find a weed infested area, let the landowner or land managing agency know so that they can take steps to control the weeds.



This is to certify that



is an official

# Webbmaster



University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension



# Nevada Noxious Weeds List

(as of August, 2008)

According to Nevada law (NAC 555), the person who owns or uses a property must try to control the following weeds on that property. The following weeds are designated noxious weeds.

## Category A Weeds

These are weeds that have either not made it to Nevada yet or are just getting here. These are the weeds that we all need to watch out for most carefully so we can stop them before they start to cause problems here.

African rue ( <i>Peganum harmala</i> )	Malta starthistle
Austrian fieldcress ( <i>Rorippa austriaca</i> )	( <i>Centaurea melitensis</i> )
Austrian peaweed	Mayweed chamomile ( <i>Anthemis cotula</i> )
( <i>Sphaerophysa salsula</i> )	Mediterranean sage ( <i>Salvia aethiopsis</i> )
Black henbane ( <i>Hysocyamus niger</i> )	Purple loosestrife
Camelthorn ( <i>Alhagi pseudalhagi</i> )	( <i>Lythrum salicaria</i> , <i>Lythrum virgatum</i> and their cultivars)
Common crupina ( <i>Crupina vulgaris</i> )	Purple starthistle
Dalmatian toadflax ( <i>Linaria dalmatica</i> )	( <i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i> )
Dyer's woad ( <i>Isatis tinctoria</i> )	Rush skeletonweed ( <i>Chondrilla juncea</i> )
Eurasian water-milfoil	Sow thistle ( <i>Sonchus arvensis</i> )
( <i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i> )	Spotted knapweed
Giant reed ( <i>Arundo donax</i> )	( <i>Centaurea maculosa</i> )
Giant salvinia ( <i>Salvinia molesta</i> )	Squarrose knapweed
Goats rue ( <i>Galega officinalis</i> )	( <i>Centaurea virgata</i> )
Green fountain grass	Sulfur cinquefoil ( <i>Potentilla recta</i> )
( <i>Pennisetum setaceum</i> )	Syrian bean caper
Houndstongue ( <i>Cynoglossum officinale</i> )	( <i>Zygophyllum fabago</i> )
Hydrilla ( <i>Hydrilla verticillata</i> )	Yellow starthistle
Iberian starthistle ( <i>Centaurea iberica</i> )	( <i>Centaurea solstitialis</i> )
Klamath weed ( <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> )	Yellow toadflax ( <i>Linaria vulgaris</i> )

## Category B Weeds

These are weeds that are growing in Nevada but only in scattered areas in some parts of the state. We need to do as much as we can to keep them from spreading.

Carolina horse nettle (*Solanum carolinense*)

Diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*)

Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)

Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)

Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*)

Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*)

Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*)

Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*)

White horse nettle (*Solanum elaeagnifolium*)

## Category C Weeds

Category C weeds are weeds that are already growing in a lot of areas across the state. Although they are making themselves at home in Nevada, we can still work to try to get rid of them or to keep them from getting into new areas.

Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

Hoary cress (*Cardaria draba*)

Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense*)

Perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*)

Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)

Puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*)

Salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp.)

Water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*)

How many different weeds are on the Nevada Noxious Weed list?  
Do you think there are more weeds or fewer weeds on the list than there were 20 years ago? Why?

## Answer Key

Page 28

### How many can you find? (p. 27)

Butterflies: 4

Lizards: 1

Fish: 2

Scorpions: 1

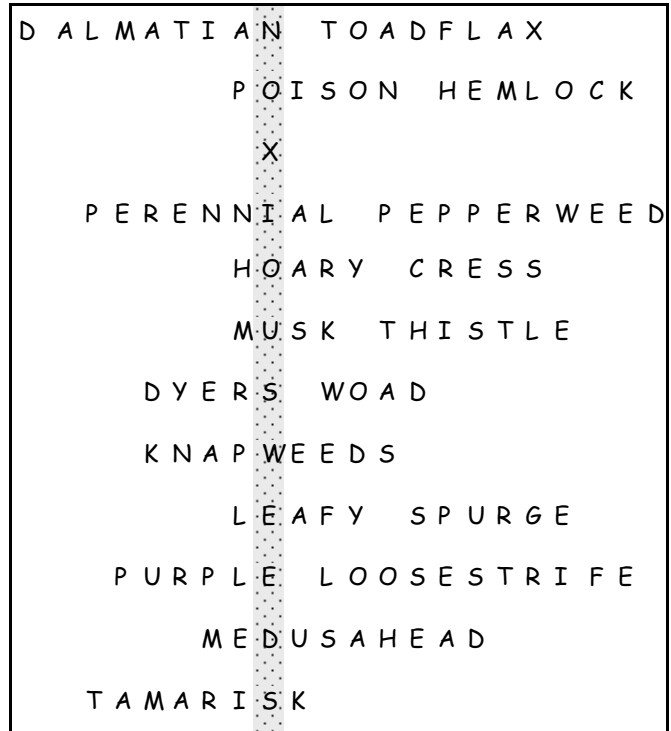
Frogs: 1

Caterpillars: 1

Ants: 1

Do you think these animals would rather live near noxious weeds or native plants?

Near native plants - they need native plants for food, shelter, and good habitat.



Which weeds are growing near water? Perennial pepperweed, purple loosestrife, saltcedar and Canada thistle

Which weeds might grow in a dry place? Rush skeletonweed, puncturevine, yellow starthistle and Scotch thistle

How many weeds can you count that have pink or purple flowers? (8) Can you name them? Musk thistle, all three knapweeds, purple loosestrife, Scotch thistle, saltcedar and Canada thistle

How many weeds can you count that have white flowers? (5) Can you name them? Waterhemlock, poison hemlock, hoary cress, perennial pepperweed and Canada thistle

How many weeds can you count that have yellow flowers? (6) Can you name them? Yellow starthistle, puncturevine, Dyers woad, rush skeletonweed, leafy spurge and Dalmatian toadflax

Page 33

How many weeds are on the Noxious Weed list? (47) Are there more now, or fewer? There are more weeds on the list now because we are moving them around much more quickly.

# Color Pictures of Weeds in This Book



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- Page 10: Medusahead
- Page 11: Yellow starthistle
- Page 12: Musk thistle
- Page 13: Knapweeds
- Page 14: Puncturevine
- Page 15: Purple loosestrife
- Page 15: Eurasian watermilfoil
- Page 16: Western waterhemlock
- Page 17: Poison hemlock



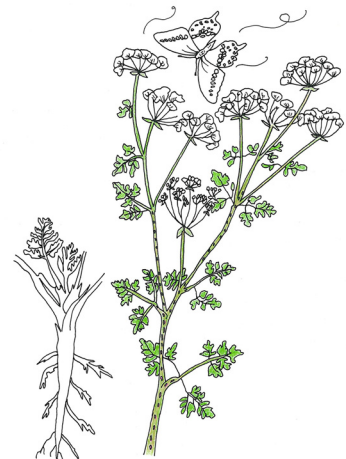
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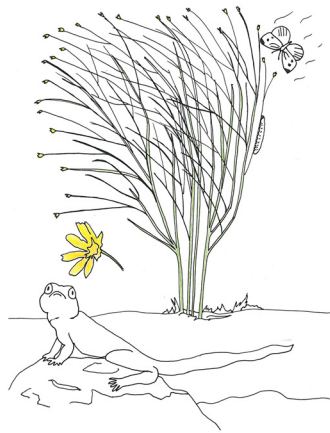


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# Color Pictures of Weeds in This Book



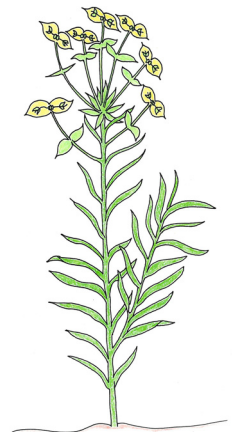
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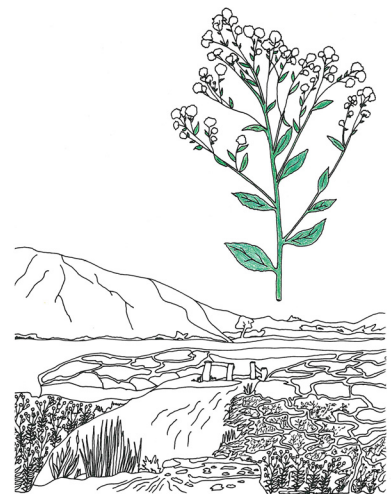


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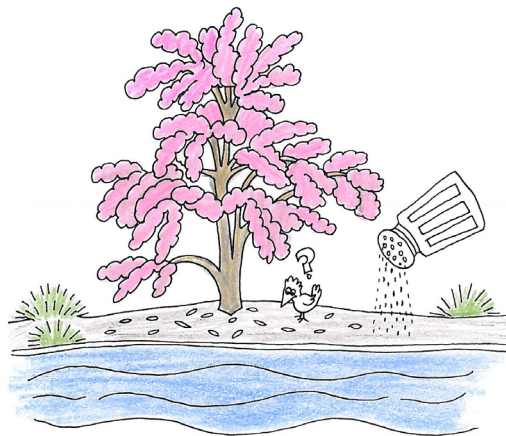
- Page 18: Dyers woad
- Page 19: Rush skeletonweed
- Page 20: Hoary cress
- Page 21: Leafy spurge
- Page 22: Dalmatian toadflax
- Page 23: Perennial pepperweed
- Page 24: Scotch thistle
- Page 25: Saltcedar
- Page 26: Canada thistle



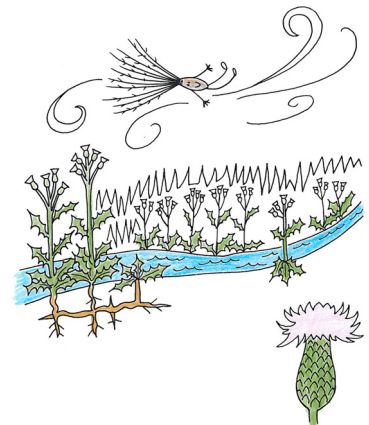
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# University of Nevada Cooperative Extension County Office Locations

## Battle Mountain

815 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., 89820  
775-635-5565, FAX 775-635-8309

## Caliente

360 Lincoln St., P.O. Box 728, 89008  
775-726-3109, FAX 775-726-3332

## Carson City/Storey County

2621 Northgate Ln., Ste. 15, 89706  
775-887-2252, FAX 775-887-2065

## Elko

701 Walnut St., 89801  
775-738-7291, FAX 775-753-7843

## Ely

995 Campton St., 89301  
775-289-4459, FAX 775-289-1462

## Eureka

701 S. Main St., P.O. Box 613, 89316  
775-237-5326, FAX 775-237-5164

## Fallon

111 Sheckler Rd., 89406  
775-423-5121, FAX 775-423-7594

## Hawthorne

314 5<sup>th</sup> St., P.O. Box 810, 89415  
775-945-3444, FAX: 775-945-2259

## Incline Village

**865 Tahoe Blvd., Ste. 110**  
P.O. Box 8208, 89452  
775-832-4150, FAX 775-832-4139

## Las Vegas

8050 Paradise Road, Suite 100, 89123  
702-222-3130, FAX 702-222-3100

## Logandale

1897 N. Moapa Valley Blvd.,  
P.O. Box 126, 89021  
702-397-2604, FAX (702) 397-8301

## Lovelock

810 6<sup>th</sup> St., P.O. Box 239, 89419  
775-273-2923, FAX 775-273-7647

## Minden/Gardnerville

1329 Waterloo Lane, P.O. Box 338,  
89423  
775-782-9960, FAX 775-782-9968

## Nixon

PO Box 256, 89424  
775-574-0101 Ext.28, FAX 775-574-1025

## Pahrump

1651 E. Calvada Blvd., 89048  
775-727-5532, FAX 775-727-6199

## Reno

5305 Mill St., 89502  
775-784-4848, FAX 775-784-4881

## Tonopah

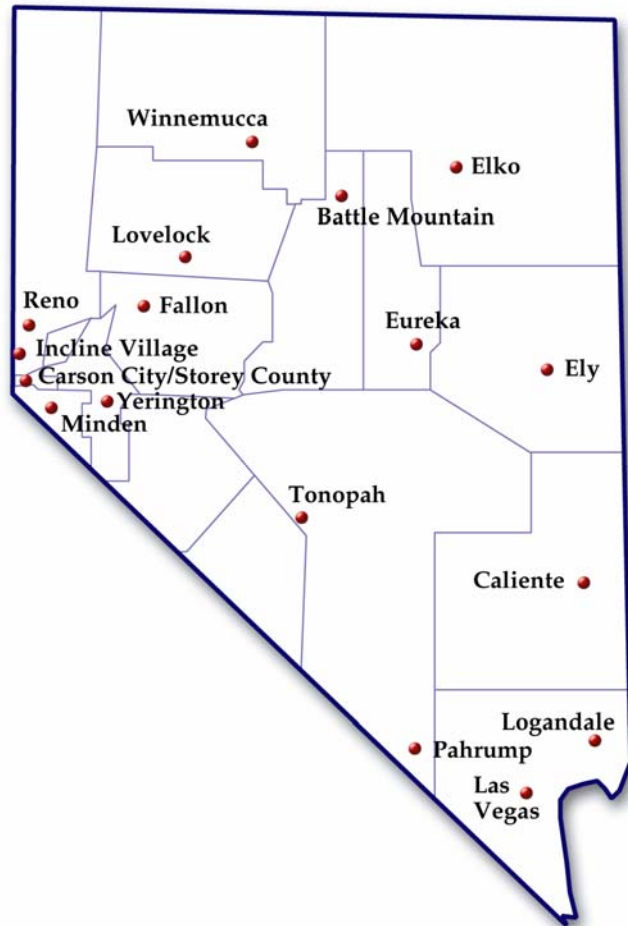
475 St. Patrick St., P.O. Box 231,  
89049  
775-482-5001, FAX 775-482-5396

## Winnemucca

1085 Fairgrounds Rd., 89445  
775-623-6304, FAX 775-623-6307

## Yerington

504 S. Main St., P.O. Box 811, 89447  
775-463-6541, FAX 775-463-6545



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