



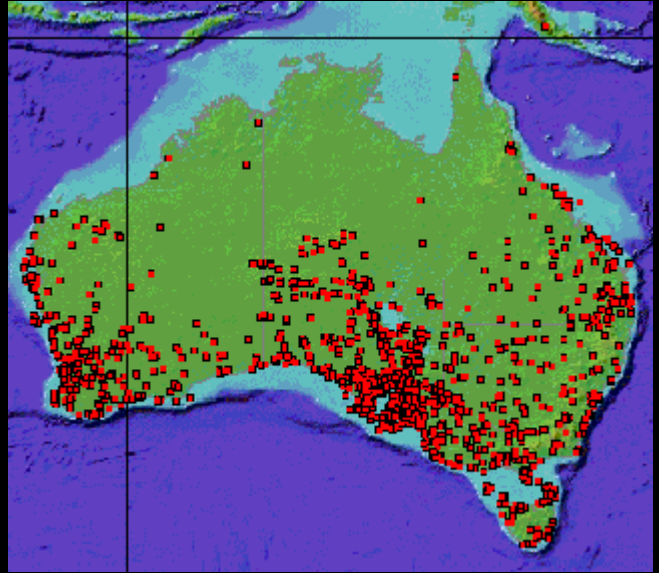
EDUCATE

DESIGN

CONSULT

Sow Thistle

Sonchus oleraceus



Courtesy of Australian virtual herbarium

Description: Common Sow thistle is an erect, hairless, branched annual or biennial herb about 1 m tall with hollow stems which have a milky sap. The yellow dandelion-like flower heads are clustered, each about 2 cm in diameter.

As A Soil Indicator: Low Calcium, Very High Potassium, Very low Phosphate, Very high Magnesium, High Manganese, High Iron, High Sulphur, High Copper, High Zinc, High Boron, High Aluminum Good drainage,

Life cycle: Annual or short lived perennial. Seeds germinate from autumn to spring and it grows mainly in the cooler months. It usually flowers in spring and dies after flowering finishes in summer.

Beneficial: Palatable fodder. Stems and root have been known to be eaten. Leaves and shoots eaten as cooked vegetable. Family: Asteraceae which is known to attract beneficial insects like ladybeetles. Can be used as a sacrificial plant

Detrimental: Considered a weed of crops, fallows, gardens, horticulture and disturbed areas. Increases in stubble mulching systems. Attracts aphids

Toxicity: Plants affected by aphids may cause photo sensitisation in cattle