



September 2, 2008

**Combating Thistles Using NatureZap**

Thistles is the common name of a group of flowering plants with sharp prickles on the leaves and are in the plant family Asteraceae. Prickles often occur all over the plant - on surfaces such as those of the stem and flat parts of leaves. These are an adaptation to protect the plant against herbivorous animals, discouraging them from feeding on the plant. This and the fact that the root structure is so pervasive, makes them particularly difficult to control once they appear in a garden or flower bed. Not only does it hurt to pull them out and when doing so, you make even more thistle plants!

To help homeowners keep these nasty plants under control, the NatureZap, when using the following procedure can accomplish just that. It's important to note that the earlier you start the easier you can achieve the desired result: no thistles!

1. Look at the following picture of an early thistle infestation and after its been treated with the NatureZap.



In the picture directly above, we see that the thistle plants range in size. Treat the smaller plants, those that are 2" or less in height, directly with the NatureZap using the medium weed times as shown on the NatureZap label.





These are before and 3 minutes after pictures of a properly treated thistle using the NatureZap.



2. For thistles larger than this, first cut the thistle down at the ground and then stab the NatureZap into the root directly.

Cut,  
then

Stab.



3. The next step is to wait 1-2 weeks and then treat what comes back up. Remember, thistles have large underground root structures and have rhizomes. These slender brittle roots can be down 12 inches in soil and they fragment easily. Root fragments can produce new plants. So it's important to get them as soon as they come out of the ground.
4. Here's a picture to illustrate that point. See the small thistles that came up in 2 weeks after we treated them.



In this photo, you can see a new sprout coming up near the dead thistle treated 2 weeks before. Simply treat this plant with the NatureZap to eliminate it.

5. Unfortunately, you're not done yet. Thistle seeds may have been spread in the area. So, you will need to treat all new growth before it gets re-established. Every 2 weeks, re-inspect the site and remove all the new thistles by using the medium weed setting on the NatureZap.

Thistles are tough, but with a little additional effort, you can get rid of them without resorting to over using chemicals.