



## BLESSED THISTLE

**Botanical Name:** Cnicus benedictus

**Common Name:** St. Benedict's thistle, holy thistle

**Medicinal part:** Dried leaves, flowering stems

**Description:** Cnicus benedictus (St. Benedict's thistle, blessed thistle, holy thistle or spotted thistle), is a thistle-like plant in the family Asteraceae, native to the Mediterranean region, from Portugal north to southern France and east to Iran. It is known in other parts of the world, including parts of North America, as an introduced species and often a noxious weed. It is the sole species in the monotypic genus Cnicus. It is an annual plant growing to 60 cm tall, with leathery, hairy leaves up to 30 cm long and 8 cm broad, with small spines on the margins. The flowers are yellow, produced in a dense flowerhead (capitulum) 3–4 cm diameter, surrounded by numerous spiny basal bracts.



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Golden Bough Botanicals Inc.

12 - 1585 Cliveden Avenue  
Delta, BC V3M 6M1, Canada

Toll Free: 1-877-950.8700

[www.goldenbough.ca](http://www.goldenbough.ca)