



**Woolly Thistle** *Cirsium eriophorum*





**Spear Thistle**  
*Cirsium vulgare*

**Marsh Thistle**  
*Cirsium palustre*



# Three thistles compared

<b>Spear Thistle</b> <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	<b>Marsh Thistle</b> <i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<b>Woolly Thistle</b> <i>Cirsium eriophorum</i>
Large spear-shaped terminal lobes to leaves	Crinkly edges; very spiny	Narrow spine-tipped lobes
Leaf surface rough	Leaf margins often purple-tinged	Woolly underneath
Very common in most habitats	Only common in marshy habitat	Rough grassland & roadsides
In virtually all tetrads in the British Isles	Found throughout the British Isles	Restricted to chalk in southern England