



SPRING-THISTLE

Cirsium carolinianum
(Walt.) Fern. & Chub.

This species is a native biennial; the first year a basal rosette is produced and a branching flowering stem up to four feet the second year. The plant then dies. Stem leaves are few, are white-hairy beneath, and are coarsely toothed-divided near the base. Leaf margins are weakly-spined. Long naked peduncles terminate the branches and bear heads of pink-purple flowers. This is our earliest thistle to flower (May) and normally grows in fields and on roadsides. You might look for the large stand on Silver Trail just west of the Woodlands Nature Center (**Asteraceae**, the Aster Family).