

Marsh Thistle

Regno: flora

Wet and marshland meadows

 [cirsiumpalustre.jpg](#) [1]

Marsh Thistle - *Cirsium palustre*

Up to two metres high, this plant has a strong, prickly stem, which although erect droops slightly at the tip because of the weight of the flowers; there are a few short leaves on the upper half.

The lanceolate basal leaves, from twelve to twenty centimetres long, arranged in a rosette, are villous underneath and divided into deep, thorny lobes. The median leaves of the stem are similar but smaller; the upper half of the stem is almost leafless or has just a few short leaves.

The flowerheads are arranged in clusters, carried on the tip of the stem; the corolla is a beautiful purple red. The Marsh Thistle flowers from the end of May to August.

It lives in very wet meadows, moorland grazing pastures and peat bogs generally at over 600 metres altitude. It is fairly frequent on the Alps and the northern Apennines, elsewhere rare. It descends as far as the plains only in particular cases: Lake Sibolla is privileged to be one of its very few lowland habitats, where the species is a clear example of an ice-age relict.

The plants also occurs at Fucecchio, the Querciola of Quarrata and Massaciuccoli as well as in some small valleys of the Cerbaie hills.

Source URL: <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/en/marsh-thistle>

Links:

[1] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/cirsiumpalustre.jpg>