

Stop

The Invasion



Photographs courtesy of Richard Old, XID Services, Inc., Bugwood.org

Scotch Broom

Cytisus Scoparius

Report Sightings

@

invasivespecies.wa.gov

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Photograph courtesy of Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org

What is it?

Scotch broom is an upright shrub in the pea family, with yellow flowers. It grows primarily in open, dry meadows and along roads. Scotch broom crowds out native species and negatively impacts wildlife habitat. It is native to Europe.

Is it here yet?

Yes, Scotch broom has been documented in many parts of Washington. For detailed information, see the distribution map at the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board Web site: www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/Cytisus_scoparius.html.

Why should I care?

Scotch broom crowds out native species and negatively impacts wildlife habitat. It can form dense, impenetrable stands that degrade farmland, prevent or slow forest regeneration and restoration of upland sites and wetland buffers, and create fire hazards. Scotch broom produces toxic compounds, which in large amounts can cause mild poisoning in animals such as horses.

What should I do if I find one?

Do not purchase, plant, or trade this species. Contact your county noxious weed coordinator at www.nwcb.wa.gov/links.htm. Report online at www.InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov/report.shtml.

How can we stop it?

To prevent spread, wash vehicles, boots, and animals that may have been in infested areas. Remove Scotch broom from your property where feasible. Scotch broom is on Washington's Terrestrial Noxious Weed Seed and Plant Quarantine list, meaning it is prohibited to transport, buy, sell, offer for sale, or distribute scotch broom plants, plant parts, or seeds (Washington Administrative Code 16-752-610). Scotch broom is listed as a



Photograph courtesy of Utah State University Archive, Utah State University, Bugwood.org

Class B noxious weed in Washington, meaning it is designated for control in certain state regions (See <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/searchResults.asp?class=B>).

What are its characteristics?

- Scotch broom is an upright perennial shrub in the pea family, which grows 3-12 feet tall, with slender sharply angled greenish brown branches.
- It has compound leaves with three egg-shaped leaflets 0.5-1 inch long, which are dark green above and pale and hairy below.
- The plant produces bright yellow 1-inch-long flowers from March to June, and flat pods, which contain 5-8 bean-like seeds.

How do I distinguish it from native species?

Scotch broom can be confused with Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*), a Class A noxious weed, or gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), a Class B noxious weed.

Where do I get more information?

- Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture: <http://biology.burke.washington.edu/herbarium/imagecollection.php?Genus=Cytisus&Species=scoparius>
- Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=4408
- King County: www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsandplants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/scotch-broom.aspx
- Stevens County: www.co.stevens.wa.us/weedboard/htm_weed/sb.htm
- U.S. Department of Agriculture: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=CYSC4>
- U.S. Forest Service: http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/scotch-broom.pdf
- Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board: <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/detail.asp?weed=44>

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