

Invasive Weeds of Oregon

By Ross Penhallegon
OSU/Lane County Extension Service
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The following information is being developed to look at invasive materials that have the potential of becoming noxious weeds. Weeds have been a thorn in our side since the creation of time. In Oregon, invasive weeds are being identified yearly in an effort to stop their movement from ornamental settings into pastures, fields and wild areas. Invasive weeds are plants that have moved into the non-landscape environment and, if not controlled, can become designated as a Noxious Weed. Many of the invasive weeds were ornamentals in the early years, which escaped and are now noxious weeds.

Oregon Department of Agriculture has two weed lists. The "A" list contains weeds that have been determine to be noxious and are quarantined. The "B" list is a list of invasive materials that are not restricted or quarantined, BUT are being looked at very closely due to their invasive characteristics. The "B" list plants are still sold at nurseries, they are not prohibited from sale, movement or propagation.

For example, the Butterfly bush (*Buddleia*) has become popular since being advertised as an attractant for butterflies. Many Oregon residents are or have planted this aggressive plant in their backyards. If not carefully attended to, this bush can escape due to its aggressive nature.

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FRENCH BROOM

Cytisus monspessulanus

Common name: Montpellier broom

Plant Description: French broom looks similar to Scotch broom. The leaves are twisted, single and dark green. The branches have fewer leaves than the Scotch broom, and have small leaves, about 1/2 inch long. It prefers full sun.

Leaves: The leaves are broader and wider than the Scotch broom. Leaves are hairy and in groups of three.

Found in the Pacific Northwest and northern Canada, it is a native to the Mediterranean region. French broom grows and spreads quickly into dense stands that crowd out native species. It was used in 1900's as an erosion control plant. The very shallow root system causes mature plants to fall over. Over the years it escaped from gardens and erosion projects to become invasive in the environment. Now it is considered to be the MOST aggressive of the brooms. It grows along roadsides and reproduces very rapidly. **In one year there can be between 400-2,100 plants.**

Flowers: The flowers are bright yellow, many flowers covering the shrub anywhere from 1' to 15' in height (8' to 13' average). The small pea-like flowers bloom along the stems and branches in two's and three's between May and July.

Seeds: The seed is in a hairy, green pod. The seeds and flowers are slightly toxic. The seed explodes from the ripe pods and can spread 6' from the plant, June to October. A mature plant makes 800-1,100 seeds per year. The seeds will last at least 30 years in the soil.

Problem: Fire hazard, due to thickness and the dead branch material.

Control:

Pulling: The root system is very small and can be hand pulled. Tall plants will actually tip over. Pull or control all plants NOT in landscape areas. The plants pull fairly easily when the soil is moist, but hand pulling may bury more seed!

Cut: Cut down the plants, dry and burn. Cutting the bushes in late summer seems to result in the best control.

Cut and Herbicide: Cut and then spray the regrowth with a herbicide. In thick patches, pull, cut or spray with a good brush killer. Cutting the bushes in late summer has seen good control. Roundup has been used but not very effectively.

Burning: Use a good propane torch to cleanup the left over seeds on the ground and scorch young plants.

Cultural: It will decline under a tree or shrub full canopy. It can still be used for erosion control, but due to its very shallow root system, it falls over.

Propagation by seed: Ants, wind, birds, and man disperse the seeds.

Helpful Hint: If the flowers are immersed in water overnight, the flower will lose their color and the water becomes a yellow dye.



SCOTCH BROOM

Cytisus scoparius

Scotch broom is a many-branched, woody, deciduous shrub that grows 3' to 10' tall. The branches are slender, angled, are more or less erect, and are dark green. The leaves are small, with the upper leaves simple, the others 3-parted. The flowers are showy, generally abundant, shaped like pea flowers, with yellow, light yellow or cream colors. The fruits are flat, brown or black pods (legume), and are hairy-white on the margins.

Cytisus is a genus of about 30 species with several occurring in Oregon.

Scotch broom is very wide spread in western Oregon and the coast. It was originally introduced as an ornamental that escaped cultivation in the landscape. The aggressive plant is native to Europe and several varieties are still used as valuable ornamentals. It has

become a nuisance in pastures, fields and forest areas and has crowded out native plants in many cases.

Flowers and leaves: Flowering occurs primarily in early May. The flowers are showy generally abundant, shaped like pea flowers, with yellow, light yellow and cream colors. The seeds remain viable in the soil for many years and are flat, brown or black pods (legumes) and hairy-white on the margins. The leaves are small, with the upper leaves simple (single), the others are 3-parted (compound).

Scotch broom interferes with reforestation projects. It competes with young plantings of Douglas firs. It does not have many natural enemies so it grows uninhibited. There are about 7 million acres infested with Scotch broom and it was recently found in Eastern Oregon.

It is nice to look at, but is very invasive in North Bend to Eugene and in Clatsop and Columbia counties.

Control:

Biological Controls: Seed weevils will control 85% of the seed, thus reducing the spread, but not the plant.

Chemical: The use of different herbicides is fairly effective in controlling Scotch broom. Garlon, Crossbow and glyphosate are registered products.

Mechanical: Different mechanical methods, i.e., cutting, hoeing, mowing and chain sawing, can reduce the biomass but usually does not reduce the total plant population.

ENGLISH IVY

Hedera helix

English ivy is a perennial, with alternate, simple leaves each with 3 to 5 lobes and 1 ½" to 4" long. They are dark green and lustrous above and often whitish veins with pale or yellowish underneath. The mature leaves are ovate and rhombic, often lighter green in color, with the base being rounded.

The vine will be 6" to 8" high if on the ground, but will grow to 90' high on trees. They grow in direct and indirect light.



Its habit is a low growing vine, rooting at every node or a high climber, attaching itself to structures with root-like holdfasts.

It is a fast grower and survives most soil types.

The flowers are perfect, only occurring on "adult" plants with greenish-white flowers in October. In Oregon the adult form occurs often when it starts to climb. The fruit is berry-like, black-drupe, ¼" across, containing 2 to 5 seeds produced in April-May following the flowering.

English ivy is a very common plant material that has been incorporated into many home landscapes around Oregon. It is very aggressive and can form a very thick mat on the ground, squeezing out other plant materials. Vines will cover other plant materials, climb trees and bushes. The plant is fairly vegetative until it begins to grow upright, where it begins to develop seeds.

Control:

Control is very labor intensive. It currently is hand or mechanically removed. Once the vine starts to move up a tree, the vines can be severed at the base of the tree. It will still take a significant amount of time to kill the vine.

Biological controls have not been found.

Chemical controls are available, but can be expensive. Label instructions need to be followed exactly.

Other cultivars: *H. helix* "Needlepoint" and "Ivanlace."

Alternative ground covers: Corsican mint, Woolly thyme, wood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*), sweet woodruff, lily of the valley.

BUTTERFLY BUSH

Buddleia spp.

Other common names: Summer Lilac, Orange-Eye Butterfly Bush



Butterfly Bush is a deciduous shrub or small tree. It can reach 12' or more, with arching, willow like branches rather thinly clothed with 1" to 4" long leaves, dark to dull green above, and gray and hairy beneath. It blooms in spring from previous years growth; profuse small clusters of flowers, mildly fragrant, lilac purple flowers make sweeping wands of color. Tolerates many soils and does very well in poor, dry gravel areas.

Butterfly Bush is a deciduous or semi evergreen shrub. Fast, obnoxious growth each spring and summer to 3' to 4' wide and 3' to 10' tall. Leaves are opposite, simple, tapered, 4" to 12" long and 1" to 3" wide with dark green above, white and felted beneath. In mid summer, small fragrant flowers (lilac with orange eye) appear in dense, arching, spike-like slender clusters 6" to 12" long or more, at branch ends, June through frost. The fruit are two-valved, 1/3 to 1/4 inch long capsules. Butterflies and other pollen collectors visit the bushes. The stems are succulent, 6 to 8 sided and very fuzzy.

Will survive in full or partial sunlight and spreads primarily by seed!

Can be killed back in cold winter areas. Rather succulent with large arching canes. A fast grower. It is almost weed-like in its ability to survive. Prefers well drained fertile soils.

Control:

There are no known biological controls. Chemical controls are lacking. Mechanical controls of digging, burning, mowing and digging will slow its growth.

Preferred Plant Varieties: Fountain Butterfly Bush, *B. alternifolia*

This is a deciduous shrub or small tree. It can reach 12' or more, with arching, willow like branches rather thinly clothed with 1" to 4" long leaves, dark to dull green above and gray and hairy beneath. It blooms in the spring from previous years growth; profuse small clusters of flowers, mildly fragrant, lilac purple flowers make sweeping wands of color. Tolerates many soils; does very well in poor, dry gravel areas.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Polygonum cuspidatum

Japanese Knotweed is a stout perennial from long creeping rhizomes. The stems are stout, reddish-brown, 4' to 9' in length. The nodes slightly swollen and surrounded by thin papery sheaths. The leaves are short-stalked, broadly ovate to triangular, 2" to 6" long and about 2/3 as wide. The base is heart shaped or straight, apex abruptly narrowed to a point; flowers greenish-white to cream, borne in large plume-like clusters at the end of the stems and in the leaf axils; fruits are 3-sided, black and shining. The plant dies back each fall.



Japanese knotweed is a native to Asia that was introduced to the United States as an ornamental and has now escaped cultivation. It is scattered in several northwestern counties on Oregon and is spreading to become a weed problem on some sites. The flowering period is July to October, with large white plumes. This is a weed of roadsides, waste areas, streams, ditch banks, and pasture lands. It is an aggressive plant and is difficult to control once it becomes established. It spreads by root division and seeds.

Control:

Mechanical: Remove the plant or cut, mow or chain saw to help keep it under control.

Chemical: Dicamba and Glyphosate work well.

Biological: There is no known biological control.

JUBATA GRASS

Cortaderia jubata

Common Names: Andean pampas grass, jubata grass



A relative of Pampas grass, it has become a serious weed on the California coast. It seeds itself freely and crowds out the local native plants. The leaves are much shorter than those of Pampas grass, making Jubata's skinnier plumes stand higher above the foliage. Jubata grass bears fewer plumes per plant.

Control:

There are no known chemical or biological controls known for Jubata grass.

Mechanical: The use of mowing, digging and chopping helps to keep the plant under control.

Cultural: Keep the plant contained within a specific area to limit the seed plume.