



Whatcom Weeds

Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board 901 W. Smith Road Bellingham WA 98226
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SPANISH BROOM

Spartium junceum

THREAT: Spanish broom is a perennial shrub native to the Mediterranean region and the Canary Islands, introduced as an ornamental. This aggressive plant invades and crowds out native plants, especially in disturbed areas, such as roadsides, trails and vacant lots. It is drought resistant and can grow in poor soil. In addition to its invasive nature, Spanish broom is a potential fire hazard and all parts of the plant are poisonous.

DESCRIPTION: Spanish broom is an evergreen shrub that can grow 6 to 10 feet in height. It has rounded stems that are mainly leafless. The leaves are simple and one-parted, which helps to distinguish it from Scotch broom, which has three-parted lower leaves. Both stems and leaves are bright green. The stems branch near the top and have clusters of flowers at the end. The bright yellow flowers are fragrant and pea-shaped, similar to Scotch broom in size. The flowers bloom from July until frost and this plant spreads only by seed. Spanish broom is best distinguished from Scotch broom by its fragrant flowers, one-parted leaves and rounded stems.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS: Spanish broom can be controlled through mechanical and chemical methods. For small infestations, hand pulling or digging is effective, providing the entire root is removed. Certain herbicides are also effective in appropriate situations; contact the weed control board for site-specific chemical recommendations.

