



Yachats Weed of the Month – April 2020

Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)

Even as you read this, Scotch Broom should be flowering in our area. Yachats trails crew members have made good progress in controlling this weed in our city, but much remains to be done, especially high up on Horizon Hill. You can help by pulling this weed now, while the soil is still moist and before the seeds set.

Identification: The shrubs grow up to 10 ft (3 m) tall, with small green leaves. Flowers are usually bright yellow but some plants, possibly hybrids, may have varying amounts of red or brown tones. Stands of broom are unmistakable when in flower. The mature seed pods are dark brown and shaped like pea pods. Broom plants produce large quantities of seed which can remain viable for up to 80 years.



French broom, Spanish broom and Portuguese broom are broadly similar in appearance, having small leaves and bright yellow flowers, and all of them are undesirable.

Impact: Scotch broom is a problem throughout Oregon. It invades various habitats, especially disturbed areas such as cleared plots and roadsides. Brooms displace native plants and inhibit reforestation. The seeds and flowers are toxic to humans and livestock, and many people are allergic to the pollen. In summer, broom represents a severe fire hazard.

Management: Oregon State University Extension Service recently revised their recommendations for dealing with broom plants. Small plants, up to ½-inch stem diameter, should be pulled out while the soil is still damp, taking care to minimize disturbance of the soil. If necessary, use a small weed wrench (available for loan at Yachats City Hall). Plants larger than this should be cut near the base – they will not regrow. Bag any plant parts that have mature seed pods. Disturbing the soil in a stand of broom is likely to promote germination of more dormant seeds.

Contact information: Call Wally at 541 606 0055 if you have any questions. For more weed info, go to www.yachatstrails.org .

Yachats “Weed of the Month” is an informational service of the Yachats Trails Committee and YIPS! - the Yachats Invasive Plants Subcommittee.