

Scotch/English Broom

NSW State Priority Weed

Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, all landholders have a "General Biosecurity Duty" to manage any "Biosecurity Risk" posed or likely to be posed by Priority Weeds. These weeds can impact on human health, the economy, the liveability of our City and the environment. Impacts can include allergies and other health issues, costs of control, loss of tourism value, degradation of natural landscapes, parks and recreation facilities, reduction of useful agricultural land and loss of primary production, loss of biodiversity and water quality.

A WEED OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The plant must be eradicated from the land and be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed; and the land must be kept free of the plant.

Scientific name

Cytisus scoparius

(Family: Fabaceae)

Description

Habit: An erect, woody, perennial shrub to 3 m. Stems are ridged and multi-branched.

Leaves: Sparse, tiny grey-green leaves have three leaflets. Older plants may be almost leafless.

Flowers: Large numbers of bright yellow pea flowers either single or in pairs along the stems in spring.

Fruit: Flat, green seed pods turn black when mature, producing huge numbers of hard, brown, shiny seeds (up to 6000 per plant per year). Seeds are believed to survive 70 years or more in the soil.

Scotch Broom looks similar to another weed - Cape or Montpellier broom *Genista monspessulana* which has similar square stems but is more leafy. Young stems are ridged becoming round with age on Cape Broom.



Photo source: BMCC Bushcare



Photo source: P Christmas



Photo source: Barbara Harley

Dispersal

Seed pods eject seeds up to four metres from the plant. Seeds can also be spread by water, animals, mud on shoes or tyres, or in contaminated soil. Scotch Broom germinates massively after a fire or soil disturbance.

Impacts

Broom is extremely competitive with native plants, retarding the growth of many understory species, leading to a massive loss of biodiversity. Broom alters the bushland habitat in which it grows, shading out native plants, keeping soil cool and changing the soils chemistry. This makes conditions unsuitable for local native plants. The problem lives on with seeds stored in the soil for a very long time, and germinating when an area is disturbed through fire, clearing or contamination from urban stormwater run-off. Broom creates fuel loads for fires.

Current distribution

Whole of Blue Mountains Local government area but mostly Upper Mountains.

Control

- Hand pull seedlings.
- Cut and paint larger plants.

Follow up is needed as you will probably have stimulated the germination of new seedlings from soil-stored seed.

For large dense patches of broom where there are no native plants:

- If plants are less than 300 mm and leafy they can be sprayed.
- If plants are taller and/or do not have much leaf, slashing can reduce the height to enable spraying to be done after there is dense leafy regrowth.

Follow up is essential. Treat plants not completely dead, by cutting and painting.



Hand Removal



Cut and Paint

Plant this instead

Local species of *Gompholobium*, or *Lambertia formosa*, *Hakea teretifolia*, *Banksia spinulosa*.

Control illustrations by Virginia Bear.



NEW SOUTH WALES
WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM

For more information on weed identification, control methods, herbicide use and weed contractors see:
Blue Mountains City Council - Bushland Operations Team | <http://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/weeds> | Phone: 4780 5000

BLUE MOUNTAINS - NO PLACE FOR WEEDS