



# Guide for Removal of Scotch Broom

## DESCRIPTION

- ◆ Invasive shrub that grows in dense patches and prevents native species from establishing.
- ◆ It is **hypoallergenic**, toxic to grazing animals, and affects soil properties.
- ◆ Fire hazard; highly flammable
- ◆ Produces tens of thousands of seeds per plant viable in soil up to 40 years.
- ◆ Threatens farmlands, lowland forests



Scotch broom blooming along roadway



## SCOTCH BROOM IDENTIFICATION

- ◆ Shrub like woody plant with many branches, 3 to 10 ft tall.
- ◆ Deciduous leaves, pointed at both ends. Lower leaves are 3-parted. Leaves may fall early and leave a green stem.
- ◆ Stem is woody and dark green. Young shrubs have ridges on the stem.
- ◆ Flowers are small, yellow, 3/4 in long with 5 petals. Seed pods are flattened and pea-like.
- ◆ Grows on roadsides, pastures, grasslands, shorelines, and other full sunlight areas.

## MECHANICAL OR MANUAL CONTROL

- ◆ Use when site is easily accessible, intensive control is possible, or as a precursor to a chemical control in the winter. Monitor after control is done, and repeat where necessary.

### Cutting

- ◆ Best time to cut Scotch broom is in the summer before the plant goes to seed. An easy way to remember is the motto "Cut broom when in bloom" (as first used by Broombusters in British Columbia).
- ◆ Cut as low to the ground as possible. Loppers, handsaws or pruners are the recommended tools.
- ◆ Use a tarp to store cuttings on site until they are dry. Dispose of them appropriately. Leaving cuttings on the ground can cause the plant to leech substance into the soil that starves neighboring plants of nutrients.

Note:

**Cutting is also recommended for large patches and mature plants in winter. If the plants are too large to cut during bloom, cutting them mid-stem in the winter can stunt their growth significantly and sometimes eradicate them entirely. Once the plant is dead you can remove it and properly dispose of it.**

### Digging

- ◆ For smaller patches and younger plants, it is possible to remove Scotch broom by digging or uprooting the plant. The roots are shallow and uprooting the plant is not difficult if the plant has not established itself for multiple years.
- ◆ Uprooting and digging can be done with a shovel, by hand or with a weed wrench tool.
- ◆ **Timing:** It is best to dig up Scotch broom before it goes to seed. Early in the spring is the most suitable time for digging as the soil is softer and removal is easier.
- ◆ If leaving on site to dry, it is recommended to put down a barrier (like a tarp) to prevent leeching in the soil.



Scotch broom adult plant

## CHEMICAL CONTROL

Carefully selected and applied herbicides can provide a viable and relatively efficient option for controlling Scotch broom.

To learn more about chemical controls and the options available to you, please visit our website (<https://nr.tulaliptribes.com/Topics/Wetlands>) or contact the Tulalip Tribes Natural Resources Department.

\*If you live on **fee-simple** land, Snohomish County Noxious Weeds may be able to provide some services to aid in control of this weed.

**TULALIP TRIBES Natural Resources Department contacts:**

**Jon Hall**, Wetland Biologist - (360) 716-4594

**Brett Shattuck**, Restoration Ecologist - (360) 716-4618

**Natasha Coumou**, Asst. Restoration Ecologist - (360) 716-4635



For an electronic version of this pamphlet scan the QR code.