

CARP Factsheet

INVASIVE ALIEN PLANT: The Broom

COMMON NAME: Scotch Broom

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Cytisus scoparius*

PLANT TYPE: Perennial Shrub

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Form – stiff, bushy, usually in clumps

Height – 2m to 3m

Leaves – small, lower have 3 leaflets, upper may be simple

Flowers – bright yellow, regular, pea-like

Fruit – pod (4-5cm long) with long hairs along seam

Blooms in – June and July

Other Features – up to 3500 seeds explode out of each seed pod when ripe, and can survive in the soil for decades!

ORIGIN: Europe and Africa

INTRODUCED (1800s) FOR: ornamental, dye, medicinal purposes

HABITAT: disturbed areas, and open woodlands

MEANS OF SPREAD: seed, and roots will sucker

PROBLEMS:

- potential to invade open forest understories, and prevent regeneration of native plants

- this plant is a major threat to endangered ecosystems in Western Canada

IF YOU HAVE THIS PLANT ON YOUR PROPERTY:

- remove it promptly, and do not put it in your back yard composter (dry and burn, or regular garbage)

- dig entire plant before it goes to seed; any remaining roots will sucker

- very limited distribution in the Valley, but is more common on the South Shore

- know what you have in your garden; many varieties of broom are sold as popular ornamentals



Photos: **Green Plant** – Steve Dewey, Utah State University, www.forestryimages.com, **Infestation** – Eric Coombs, Oregon Department of Agriculture, www.forestryimages.com, **Flowering Plant** – Mike Townsend, Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG)