What is an invasive plant?

An invasive plant is any non-native plant that aggressively displaces native plants, impacts wildlife or otherwise alters ecological function to the disadvantage of native species.

Why is it important to be informed about invasive plants?

Invasive plants:

• Are introduced and spread by human actions.

• Alter our environment. In Humboldt County, invasive plants smother diverse wetland, forest, dune and grassland flora, cutting off the base of diverse food webs. They interfere with forest regeneration.

• Have economic impacts. Invasives impact local agricultural producers, timber lands and local recreational resources.

• Can be removed if caught early, but once established, may be difficult to control.

What are other invasive plants in Humboldt County?

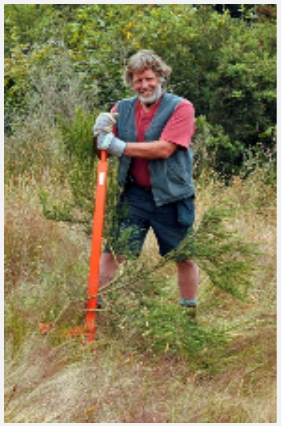
There are numerous other high priority invasive species in Humboldt County, including cotoneaster, fennel, holly and others. For a more comprehensive list, please check out our website at: www.cdfa.gov/go/HumboldtWMA

What can you do to help stop the spread of invasive plants in Humboldt County?

Learn more about the invasives in your backyard and neighborhood.

Control plants on your own land to help you and your neighbors, and consider participating in weed control days on local public lands.

After driving, hiking, biking, or working among an invasive plant, clean your clothing, tools, and vehicles of seeds and hitch-hiking plant parts.



The HWMA FREE Lend-a-Wrench Program

The HWMA has Weed Wrenches ™ available for free check-out by community members and organizations wishing to control invasive brooms and other woody shrubs.

Eliminate your broom in three easy steps:

1. Check out a Weed Wrench ™ from HWMA.
2. Pull out your mature broom in spring, when the ground is still wet.
3. Commit to pulling the new seedlings each spring thereafter.

Although seeds can persist in the soil for many years, new seedlings are much easier to pull than the mature plants, especially in winter/spring, when the ground is wet. Once the flowering shrubs are removed, hand pulling is all that is required in subsequent years.

Weed Wrenches ™ are available at:

The Bureau of Land Management Arcata Field Office,
1695 Heindon Road (off Janes Road), Arcata.
Call (707) 825-2300 for more information.

The Humboldt County Weed Management Area: Working collaboratively to reduce the extent and threat of invasive weeds.

Humboldt Weed Management Area

Contact us at:
HWMA
(707) 441-5271
wmacoordinator@co.humboldt.ca.us
www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/HumboldtWMA

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Invasive Plants in Humboldt County

Cytisus scoparius / Scotch broom

The plants pictured within, while beautiful, are invasive species that threaten to displace the native plants and wildlife of Humboldt County.

Pampas / jubata grass

(*Cortaderia* spp.)

Present throughout Humboldt County, Pampas grass alters native shrub, grass and post-logging forest lands by excluding native plants. It is easily identified by its tall, feather-like seed stalks. Difficult to pull once large, plants are better removed when small.

French, Scotch and Spanish broom

(*Genista* & *Cytisus* spp.)

With many roadside and grassland populations scattered throughout Humboldt County, brooms threaten to rapidly convert productive grasslands to unproductive shrub stands. Brooms are easily identified as yellow-flowered shrubs with small or no leaves.

Spanish heath

(*Erica lusitanica*)

While this low woody shrub is native to Europe, it now grows here in open, coastal areas with sandy soils. The shrub's flowers appear as many pink-white bells hanging on branches with soft, needle-like leaves.

Common gorse

(*Ulex europaea*)

An invader of native coastal prairies, this shrub is most easily identified by its long, sharp spines, fuzzy foliage, and yellow flowers. Like brooms, this plant threatens to change diverse, native grasslands to dense, single species stands of shrubs. The plant's flowers are a deep yellow color.

Yellow bush lupine

(*Lupinus arboreus*)

An invader of coastal dunes, this plant overwhelms diverse native dune flowers and enriches the soil, paving the way for invasive annual grasses. It is easily identified as the shrub in the dunes with the many bright yellow spikes of flowers.

Italian, yellow star, Canada and bull thistles

(*Centaurea & Cirsium spp.*)

This suite of invasive thistles infests native grasslands, roadsides and fields. These species displace native plants and are often noxious to native wildlife and livestock.

English and Cape ivy

(*Hedera* spp. & *Delairea odorata*)

These invasive vines climb over and cover native plants and trees growing in shaded places. Ivies will smother and weigh down trees and will carpet over a previously rich forest floor.

Japanese and Himalayan knotweed

(*Polygonum* spp.)

Invasive knotweeds can grow from very small amounts of leaf or stem, increasing the chance that plants growing on stream banks may aggressively expand and outcompete native plants.

Butterfly bush

(*Buddleja davidii*)

This invasive has proved to be a major problem in managed forests elsewhere. Somewhat uncommon here, this plant could be the next pampas grass or Scotch broom. The species grows quickly on disturbed areas like roadsides.

Purple loosestrife

(*Lythrum salicaria*)

Easily identified by its dense spikes of five to seven-petaled, rose-purple flowers, this species totally fills valuable marshes, riverbanks, and other freshwater wetlands. Infestations are difficult to remove once firmly established.

Foxglove

(*Digitalis purpurea*)

Easily one of our most beautiful invaders, this plant expands quickly via seed in fields and damp areas. While attractive, it outcompetes native plants, and alters native habitats. It is often found growing along roadsides.

Periwinkle

(*Vinca major*)

This low groundcover is capable of rapidly spreading over disturbed places, where it can exclude native vegetation. It is easily identified by its twisting, purple flowers.