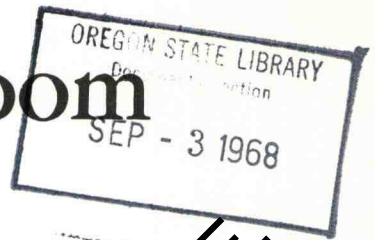


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# Scotch Broom



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SCOTCH BROOM—*Cytisus scoparius*—Showing branch with leaves and flowers, nature of plant growth with roots and nitrogen-fixing nodules, and seed. Seed magnified three diameters.

A Cooperative Extension Publication  
Oregon    ✓    Washington    ✓    Idaho

# Scotch Broom

(*Cytisus scoparius*)

Scotch broom is a perennial legume shrub 3 to 9 feet high, with stiff, angled, broom-like green branches. Many of the branches may be leafless or only slightly leafy. The leaves are three-foliolate, the leaflets being small and entire. The flowers are a bright yellow and usually borne in profusion. There are 5 sepals united to form a 2-lipped calyx, 5 petals of the pea type (a standard or banner, 2 wings, and a keel formed of 2 fused petals), 10 stamens, the filaments of which are united, and a single pistil with a long spirally curved style. The fruit is a flattened pod, somewhat hairy along the margins and several seeded. The seed is oval, about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch long, very dark greenish-brown, with a shiny surface and a light rounded appendage at the scar end.

**DAMAGE.** The chief damage is the plant's aggressive growth habit, occupying valuable pasture land with little forage value. It is reported in Europe as being poisonous, producing paralysis, but stock seldom touch it if they have anything else to eat. There are no records of stock poisoning in North America.

**CONTROL.** Tillage is one of the better methods of control. Usually the top growth should be burned or grubbed before plowing. The land should then be plowed as deeply as possible and given

several cultivations during the balance of the season. There are many hard seeds in the soil which will re-infest cleared areas. These seedlings can be controlled by tillage or by selective sprays in grain or grass crops.

Chemical control can be attained by the use of 2 pounds of 2,4-D in 5 to 10 gallons of water per acre by aircraft, or 2 pounds in 100 gallons of water for spot spraying by ground equipment. Spraying should be done during the active growing season before the pods have turned brown. Complete coverage of the plants is necessary for complete control. Scotch broom can be controlled by spraying with 2 pounds of ester 2,4-D in 5 to 10 gallons of oil during the dormant season.

Picloram (Tordon) is effective in Scotch broom control, particularly in combination with 2,4,5-T or 2,4-D. Plants should be sprayed during active growth with  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of Tordon plus 2 pounds of 2,4,5-T or 2,4-D per 100 gallons of water. Tordon is a very active chemical and must be used, as all herbicides, according to label instructions to prevent injury to other plants.

**BIOLOGICAL CONTROL.** Stem and twig borers (*Leucoptera spartifoliella*) have been found in Scotch broom infestations in Oregon. At the present time, it is questionable if these borers will be of practical value in controlling Scotch broom.

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Prepared by Rex Warren and Harold Youngberg, Extension farm crops specialists at Oregon State University, in consultation with Washington State University and the University of Idaho.

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