Control Options for Scotch Broom

General Information

Scotch broom can grow to be a large shrub and can quickly take over open areas. As it produces large amounts of seed, it may take several years to eradicate both the adult plants and any emerging seedlings on a site

Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Small stands of scotch broom can be controlled through hand removal. Plants should be dug or pulled, taking care to remove as much of the root as possible. A tool called a Weed Wrench may make pulling of the plants easier. Weed Wrench™ and Extractigator™ tools are available for free loan from the Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board (360-778-6232 or (360) 778-6234). Disturbance of the soil during manual control may cause the germination of any broom seeds in the soil, so the area should be monitored to control any new seedlings. When control is completed, re-planting the site with non-invasive plants will aid in prevention of growth of new seedlings.

Cutting can be effective on older Scotch broom plants that are no longer green at the base and have a stem diameter of 2" or more. Cutting is most effective after a period of dry weather in the summer (July to September). Plants should be cut as close to the ground as possible. The cut plants should be monitored for new growth and cut again, as needed.

Chemical Recommendations

Scotch broom can be controlled using specific herbicides. When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions for rates, spraying conditions, personal protective equipment and grazing intervals. If spraying is the chosen option, spray late in the evening to reduce the direct impact on pollinating insects. Do not spray when it is windy or raining, or when rain is forecast. Do not cut sprayed plants for at least 2 weeks after herbicide application. Herbicides should not be sprayed within 60 feet of water bodies and creeks, without further consultation with the Noxious Weed Board. Remember, it is the herbicide applicators responsibility to apply the product in accordance to the instructions on the label.

Triclopyr (many brand names) can be applied to actively growing broom (foliage) at a 0.5 to 1.5 % rate. Triclopyr can also be used as a cut-stump treatment. Follow label directions for mixing the appropriate solution strength. For such an application, cut the broom at the base and paint the stump with herbicide immediately after cutting.

Glyphosate (RoundUp®, KillZall®, others) can be applied to actively growing plants in the spring. Applications should be made with a 1.5 to 2% glyphosate concentration. Glyphosate will kill grass and other vegetation so care should be taken if used around desired vegetation. The loss of surrounding plants also may allow germination of any broom seeds in the soil. Spray plants until they are just wet.

> *NEVER apply RoundUp® or other herbicides to standing water unless they are distinctly labeled for aquatic use.* Ingredients in non-aquatic products may be toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms. Aquatic formulations of herbicides are generally only available to licensed pesticide applicators in Washington State. If the target plants are immediately adjacent to or are in standing water, a state permit may be required in order to treat those plants with an aquatically approved herbicide.

- **Always read and understand the label of the herbicides you choose to use.**
- **More is NOT better when using herbicides, and may actually hinder the ability of the herbicide to injure the target plant if the solution is too strong. This wastes money and effort and puts more product into the environment than is necessary. ALWAYS follow the recommended rates on the label.**
- **With all herbicides, <u>when</u> you apply them is as important as <u>how</u> you apply them.**

The mention of a specific product brand name in this document is not, and should not be construed as an endorsement or as a recommendation for the use of that product. Herbicide information is taken from the WSU Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook and the King County Noxious Weed Program (Seattle, WA).