

SUMMER/FALL
2021

CURRY *Currents*



29692 Ellensburg Avenue
PO Box 666

Gold Beach, OR 97444

(541) 247-2755

info@currywatersheds.org

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Invader Plants



INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE, NOXIOUS...WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE AND DOES IT MATTER?

- **Native:** A species that is a part of the balance of nature that has developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region or ecosystem. This should always be qualified with a geographic place name, i.e. 'Native to ...'
- **Endemic:** This is a special kind of native in that the species is found only in a certain place, or in association with a certain substrate like serpentine soils. We are privileged to live in the Siskiyou Mountains, which is an area with many endemic species. (Learn More: <https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/beauty/serpentines/center/index.shtml>)
- **Non-native:** A species introduced with human help (intentionally or accidentally) to a new place or new type of habitat where it was not previously found.
- **Invasive:** A plant that is both non-native and able to establish on many sites, grow quickly, and spread to the point of disrupting plant communities or ecosystems. "Invasive species are defined by Oregon Statute as 'non-native organisms that cause economic or environmental harm and are capable of spreading to new areas of the state.'" — ORS 570.750 (Oregon Invasive Species Council: <https://www.oregoninvasivespeciescouncil.org/>)
- **Noxious:** Any plant or plant product that can directly or indirectly injure or cause damage to crops (including nursery stock or plant products), livestock, poultry or other interests of agriculture, irrigation, navigation, the natural resources of the United States, the public health, or the environment. This is the legal context for Federal noxious weeds. In general, it is a plant that is particularly bothersome.
- **Weed:** A plant (native or non-native) that is not valued in the place where it is growing.

USDA Plant-Related Definitions: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ct/technical/ecoscience/invasive/?cid=nrcs142p2_011124

"SO, DOES IT MATTER"? YES.

As noted in the definitions, when a non-native plant finds a place where it can be invasive and that plant has noxious qualities, it becomes a problem. For plants, 'place' matters! "Well, isn't it just survival of the fittest"? While you could look at it that way, an important thing to remember is that these plants move with people. Otherwise, they are limited by their own means and controlled by many geographic and environmental factors. Historically there was no need for all of these terms, as human travel was relatively limited compared with today's options. This has resulted in invasives spreading way faster than would naturally occur without our help, often without our explicit knowledge. We have created all sorts of short-cuts and avenues for these plants to spread. The spread of invasive and noxious weeds has cost people and economies countless billions in control efforts, species and diversity loss, and, generally, the loss of productive land to monocultures of undesirables. Some also come with their own special hazards such as the high flammability of gorse, and the potential of Japanese knotweed to damage infrastructure.



Japanese knotweed

Japanese knotweed has the potential to cause property damage by its expanding network of underground rhizomes and roots.

Photo credit: Nic Seal

For many animals including humans, plants are a major food source. So even though an animal may be observed eating or browsing invasive species, it doesn't mean it is good for them. While we can order food from all over the world, no other animals have that luxury when their primary food source is replaced with invasives. The invasive food source may be inedible, innutritious, poisonous, or all of the above. Lest we forget, it is this same 'order food from all over the world' mentality that contributes to the idea that place doesn't matter for plants, and therefore invasives don't matter. Place and time are directly responsible for the diversity of plant species that sustain us. While it may be true that Armenian (Himalayan) blackberries are tasty and not inherently bad for us, imagine if that was all we had to eat. The web of life is highly complex, and if we continue to allow noxious weeds to poke big holes in that web, whole portions may collapse. But we can do better! Controlling noxious weeds is everyone's responsibility.

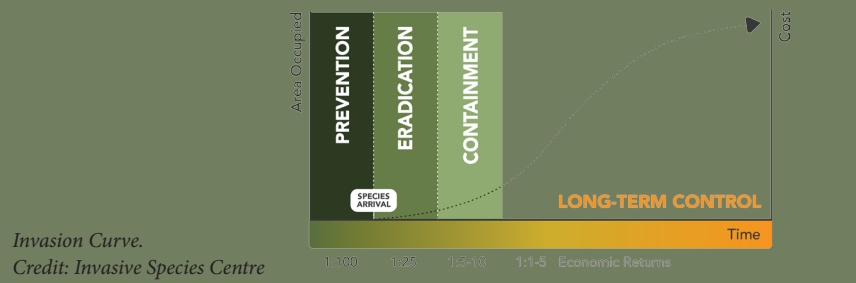
PREVENTION

Weeds don't just show up and take over. There are multiple stages of management from prevention to long-term control. After a species is introduced, management costs increase and the likelihood of eradication decreases as time passes. Prevention has a high return on investment, and public awareness is essential for this stage. Eradication entails removing a species population in its entirety. Beyond this stage is about the time that people start to take notice, but there is still time to blunt the spread. Containment entails reducing further spread of an introduced species. If we wait too long, the plant is nearly impossible to eradicate and the focus shifts to limiting populations and protecting remaining resources.



WORKING TOGETHER

Since weeds don't care about political boundaries, we have joined up with other area land managers and formed the two working groups listed below. Through these groups, we share information about spread and control efforts ensuring that our work doesn't end at a border.



According to the USDA, Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) “is one of the most cost-effective and ecologically viable methods for controlling invasive species and is well worth the effort to protect natural and agricultural resources.” While there is no way to predict if a specific plant in a specific place will become noxious or invasive, acting quickly with known invaders and keeping tabs on suspects is paramount.

► The best way to stop invasives is to prevent them from getting out and established in the first place, and here are some ways you can do that:

- Learn what weeds are a problem for your area. Most states regulate noxious weeds or invasives in some way. Check with your local Department of Agriculture, SWCD, Watershed Council, University Extension Office, or Municipality for the rules in your area.
- Report suspicious sightings. See the ‘Community Resources’ section of this newsletter for information on where to report.
- Clean your gear. After recreating or working, clean your boots and gear of any loose soil or visible seeds.
- Insist that any equipment contractors doing work for you arrive with their machines clean and leave clean.
- Look for weed free straw, hay, and rock resources when completing projects.
- Don't let new invaders set seed! When cutting noxious weeds, double bag seed heads and take or send them to the landfill. If a plant can grow from cuttings or rhizomes, either do the same or pile nearby and rotate your pile until the vegetation is brown or the roots/rhizomes are dried out completely.



SOUTH COAST COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT AREA (SoCo CWMA)

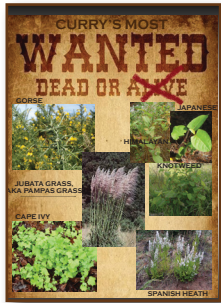
The mission of the SoCo CWMA is to reduce the negative impact of invasive plant species on the economy, environment and human health by collaborating with the community through education, information exchange and coordinating regional efforts to control. The CWMA covers Coos and Curry Counties. We are working on a website that is planned to launch this summer.

GORSE ACTION GROUP

GORSE ACTION GROUP (GAG)

The GAG is working to control and reduce the spread of gorse, minimize the impact of gorse on our economy and natural resources, and provide a successful process to share with others facing gorse infestations. Many of our CWMA partners are also a part of the GAG and their efforts can be seen on the GAG website (Link: www.gorseactiongroup.org). If you need assistance with large patches of gorse, you can reach out to the group via email or phone and someone will direct you to the appropriate resources: gorseactiongroup@gmail.com or 541-435-1731

CURRY'S MOST WANTED WEEDS



Our Wild West poster.

The Curry Watersheds Partnership treats many different noxious weed species during our restoration efforts, but there are five that we actively control through strategies designed for each invader. EDRR is a main strategy for keeping these invaders at bay on the Southern Oregon Coast. In the case where the weed is more widespread, don't worry - we have plenty of experience, can help you plan your control, and may have funding to assist you.

1



Gorse

2



Jubata grass

3

Japanese knotweed



Himalayan knotweed

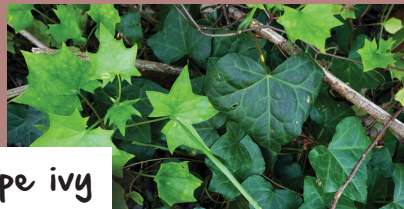


4



Spanish heath

5



Cape ivy

Cape ivy (left) and English ivy (right) are both noxious weeds in Curry County, but cape ivy is on our Most Wanted list

Name	ID	Concerns	Prevention	Report *
Gorse (<i>Ulex europaeus</i>)	Perennial shrub 3-10+', thorns, yellow flowers, dense impenetrable thickets.	Highly flammable, generally nasty and highly invasive, long-lasting seed bed.	Stop seed dispersal.	Single plants or small < 50'x50' not near existing infestations.
Jubata grass, aka purple pampas grass (<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>)	Perennial grass 6+', erect plumes extend above the leaf tussock. Caution, leaf edges are sharp!	Seeds are asexual clones, fire hazard, can damage sidewalks and fences.	Control seed dispersal.	Single plants or small clusters not associated with larger nearby infestations.
Knotweeds: Japanese, Himalayan (<i>Fallopia japonica</i> & <i>Polygonum lystachyum</i>)	Stout, erect, hollow stems, spade (jap.) Or tapered (Himalayan), canes die back in fall.	Persistent deep-rooted rhizomes, can damage infrastructure, significant streambank erosion due to riparian degradation.	Control rhizomes and plant fragments (can sprout vegetative).	Any size patch.
Spanish heath (<i>Erica Lusitanica</i>)	Erect evergreen shrub, needle like leaves distinguish it from heathers (flat leaves). White bell-shaped flowers. Most of our sites are confined to the coos-curry county line having escaped when a storm destroyed a nearby nursery.	Readily invades coastal scrub-shrub, cranberry bog invader.	Control seeds.	Always.
Cape Ivy (<i>Delairea odorata</i>)	Perennial vine, leaves pale green.	Extensive rhizomes, smothers coastal riparian habitats.	Control rhizomes and plant fragments.	Always - Curry County has the only known populations in Oregon (19 sites).

* Report: When to report for EDRR ('Early Detection Rapid Response')



RESOURCES FOR WEED-RELATED INFORMATION AND REPORTING

1 To learn what weeds are a problem in your area, see the Oregon Noxious Weed List and the Curry County Noxious Weed List.

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/weeds/oregonnoxiousweeds/pages/aboutoregonweeds.aspx>

https://www.currywatersheds.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/A-B-T-Curry-County-Weed-List_2020.pdf

2. If you have seen something suspicious, or are having trouble identifying a potential invasive species, you can send reports directly to Dustin Williams at dustin.williams@currywatersheds.org or 541-373-3112, or you can use the Oregon Invasive Species Hotline or call 1-800-Invader. We get reports from the Hotline for sightings in our service area.

<https://oregoninvasiveshotline.org/>



If you need to report suspicious sightings in Coos County you can contact our CWMA partners directly. For Coos Bay/North Bend you can contact the Coos Watershed Association at iallison@cooswatershed.org. For Bandon, Coquille, Powers, and Myrtle Point you can contact the Coquille Watershed Association at slaier@coquillewatershed.org.

3. You can see all previously reported instances of Oregon Weeds on the Oregon Department of Agriculture WeedMapper.

<https://geo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=54e9b0eaac34bc4a146a33faa9f8966>

Upcoming Volunteer Events

& COMMUNITY RESOURCES



IVY PULLING IN HUNTER CREEK JULY 25TH, 1PM - 4PM

Need to blow off some steam? There's no better way than pulling English Ivy, and you can help us improve the riparian corridor along Hunter Creek while you're at it. Tools will be provided. RSVP by calling Miranda Gray at 541-373-3127.



'CHERISH THE CHETCO' SATURDAY AUGUST 14TH, 9AM - 2PM

Alfred Loeb State Park in Brookings
Join us for the annual 'Cherish the Chetco', Saturday August 14th from 9am-2pm at Alfred Loeb State Park in Brookings. This is a volunteer river clean-up with free kayaking provided and no experience necessary. There will be limited boats and shuttle spots so please RSVP by calling Miranda Gray at 541-373-3127.



'STORM CHASERS' COMING WINTER 2021

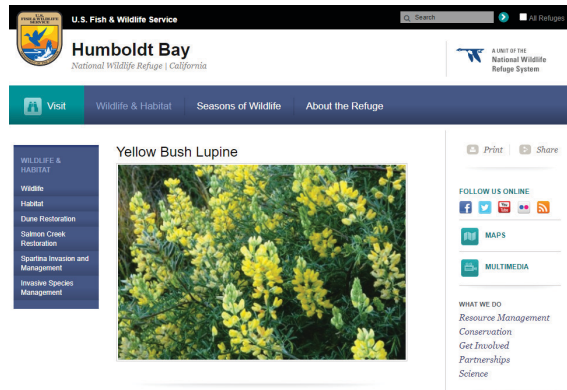
If you were around in the late 2000's you may remember the Storm Chasers program, and you may be excited to hear that it's coming back. This winter we will be reinstating Storm Chasers in the Floras, Elk, and Sixes watersheds. This program relies on volunteers to go out during three storms throughout the wet season to collect water samples, which we'll process and analyze to better understand how sediment moves throughout these watersheds during these incredibly important time periods. If you're interested in volunteering to help with this effort, or would like to learn more, please contact Robbie Lascheck at 541-373-7068 or fill out our volunteer form at www.currywatersheds.org/programs/monitoring/



Weed Alert!

The best way to stop a weed is to stop it before it gets too far. So, while the rest of this edition focuses on our Most Wanted escapees, we want to keep our eyes out for future problem species. Which brings us to yellow bush lupine (YBL; *Lupinus arboreus*), a large perennial shrub with yellow flowers. While it is native to southern California, seeds were brought to northern California as erosion control in 1908 and since then it has spread through the coastal dune habitats of Humboldt Bay. The plant's effect on this open dune habitat is dramatic. It quickly creates a deep duff layer and within a few years can elevate soil nitrogen levels such that the existing dune plant communities are displaced by non-native and even native shrubs that are not normally part of that habitat. There are many species, including native pollinators, that rely on the native species found in this open dune habitat for their survival.

(More about YBL: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Humboldt_Bay/wildlife_and_habitat/YellowBushLupine.html)



Threatened species...

Kinnikinnick and candystick are native to coastal dune habitats and are threatened by yellow bush lupine. This shift in plant communities to a more dense shrub community also limits recreational access to our dune environments.



candystick



kinnikinnick and candystick



Yellow Bush Lupine (YBL)

STOP!

There are several known infestations already in Curry County. We are in the early stages of working with partners at US Fish and Wildlife Service and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to plan control efforts. The Curry SWCD serves as the Curry Weed Advisory Board and is considering adding this species to the Curry County Noxious Weed List.

GO!

Native Replacements

- ☒ Streambank lupine
- ☒ Mock orange
- ☒ Tall Oregon grape



Streambank lupine

Streambank lupine (*Lupinus rivularis*), Mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*), Tall Oregon grape (*Mahonia Berberis aquifolium*). These natives are suggested alternatives that may fit the bill for your needs.

Reports FROM THE FIELD

Restoration

This summer we are kicking off a couple of amazing estuary restoration projects adjacent to Indian Creek and on Elephant Bar on the Rogue River. These areas are being enhanced to create more complexity and tidal connection for juvenile salmonids and many other species. We are working in partnership with the US Forest

Service and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz to remove large trees from Kimball Hill, with root wads attached, to be installed into each site. There are over 20 large wood installations going in. We are basically creating “fish homes or nurseries” by creating important cover for small fish as they navigate this large river system. These types of areas, called rearing areas, are critical to juvenile salmonid survival in the Rogue River.



Mark Villars of Blue Ridge Timber, LLC working to bring the large wood to the restoration locations. He is bringing the “fish homes” to the home site!

This year, our gorse management efforts received a boost when the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) awarded us a grant to maintain and restore forest resiliency through the conversion and containment of gorse in Curry County. Gorse control along our transportation network is a high priority, since the highly flammable nature of the plant creates an especially significant fire hazard along busy roadways. This can make for interesting management challenges in some locations.

One such place is about three miles north of Brookings, OR near Rainbow Rock where gorse has infested a 100+ foot rocky cliff face above Highway 101. The slope averages 100% making it nearly impossible and certainly unsafe for people or equipment to work. We’ve partnered with ODOT and State Parks to utilize a rock scaling contractor to rappel down a 140’ vertical beach rock and treat the gorse. This work gives us another tool for treating gorse on steep slopes, something we have plenty of in Southern Oregon!



Rappelling to treat gorse on steep hillslopes along Highway 101



In the Elk River watershed, we used these ODF funds to sustain and expand on 2020 projects to establish fire breaks, recover resource lands (i.e. pasture, timber), and contain the spread of gorse in the upper watershed. So far this year, ~70 acres of gorse were mowed to recover hillslope pasture and establish strategic fire breaks; ~25 acres were mowed to protect rural residential dwellings in the wildland-urban interface; additional sites were cleared along 4 miles of stream corridor; and all inventoried sites in the upper watershed were treated. In total, we now have ~148 acres of stream corridor and ~125 acres of upland under cultivation. Reforestation of these sites will start in 2022 - 2024.



Before and after shots where gorse was mowed to recover hillslope pasture.



Throughout the summer, we will also be maintaining approximately 19,000 native trees and shrubs that we have planted over the last four years, along three salmon-bearing streams on ranches in northern Curry County. We will also begin to prepare riparian sites to be planted in early 2022. The goals of this riparian work are to improve water quality and fish habitat while protecting valuable agricultural land from excessive streambank erosion.

Establishing native riparian plants on ranches in northern Curry County.



Another goal of our riparian work is to control the spread of invasive weeds along river corridors. As one example, invasive knotweed is found on some of our area riverbanks, and this weed's prolific downstream spread via broken stem fragments complicates riparian management for several of our area landowners, including our Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) participants. Knotweed stems break easily. Every time an angler whacks a path to a fishing spot, or a deer or cow pushes through a thicket to access the water, fresh rooting stock is released downstream. Control is a frustrating annual process for downstream neighbors, so a whole watershed approach that starts at the highest reach and works down the river and tributaries to identify and eradicate thickets, is ideal.



Even on a very well-maintained Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) project, we found fresh arrivals of knotweed.



understand where and how juvenile salmonids are using these areas. Preliminary results are encouraging, and suggest that juvenile coho are utilizing recently restored reaches for overwinter rearing. However, our warm, dry spring may have inhibited a lot of movement in these systems, and we're hopeful that continued monitoring in the coming years will help us best understand how fish are navigating and utilizing these restored areas.



An adult lamprey caught in one of our hoop traps. Lamprey distribution in our watersheds is currently not well understood, so it's always exciting to see them in our streams. This lamprey was well over 2ft in length!

We have a number of ongoing, and new watershed monitoring projects keeping us outside and busy these days. We're wrapping up spring projects, getting started on summer ones, and planning for a really exciting volunteer opportunity this fall/winter. Our spring fish trapping season just ended, where we're monitoring a number of tributaries of the Elk River to better



A hoop trap deployed in Kermit Creek, a tributary of the Elk River. This hoop trap is downstream of a recently completed channel/wetland restoration project designed to provide excellent overwintering habitat for juvenile coho.

With the start of summer comes the start of temperature monitoring season. This year we're monitoring water temperatures on a number of small, agriculture-dominant streams. A few of these streams are being monitored to help us identify where we may be able to improve temperatures through restoration actions, and others are being monitored to help us better understand what affects our past restoration actions are having on stream temperatures.

Education & Outreach



CWP supports school gardens at both Driftwood in Port Orford, and Riley Creek in Gold Beach. Students have been learning how weeds compete for nutrients, sunlight, and water. They even learn that a native plant can be a weed if it is growing somewhere they don't want it to, like in their carrot bed! Students have learned several strategies for minimizing weeds in their garden:

1. Mulch
2. Plant Cover Crops
3. Water only where you need to
4. Compost
5. Weed, weed, weed
6. Avoid invasive species



Using mulch to reduce weeds in the Riley Creek garden.



Fava Beans make a great cover crop to suppress weeds, and also produce nitrogen balls on their roots for soil health.

1. Mulch - Using straw to cover beds makes it much more difficult for weed seeds to germinate and more difficult for the plant to get sunlight. Mulch also keeps your soil moist. Remember soil is filled with organisms that need a specific habitat to help plants grow.

2. Plant Cover Crops - Planting cover crops will protect your soil from winter rains, compaction, and provide nutrients, and in many cases will outcompete weeds. Fava Beans are the kids' favorite. They enjoy eating the young tender top leaves, but even more, they love pulling them out of the ground and examining the nitrogen nodules growing on the roots. Some fava plants are saved for seed to plant next year's cover crops.

3. Water only where you need to - Make sure irrigation and hand watering happens near intended plants. Stray water will benefit weeds in places you don't want them, like your paths.

4. Compost - you can even turn most weeds into great soil by composting. Care is needed to make sure that seeds, and hardy roots are not still living.

5. Weed, weed, weed - Keep up on your weeding, and do not let weed plants go to seed! They will reappear next year in higher numbers. Also try to get as much of the root as you can. Some weeds, like grasses and morning glory, have hardy roots that will continue to grow under the soil and pop up again and again.

6. Avoid invasive species - Be careful not to plant them! Invasive plants are really good at surviving, will be difficult to remove, and will eventually take over.

Get Involved

LOCAL BOARD MEETINGS

*Currently being held via video tele-conference.
Please contact us for information on how to join.*



Curry Soil and Water Conservation District

Last Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm

Contact Liesl Coleman for more information:

liesl.coleman@currywatersheds.org



Lower Rogue Watershed Council

3rd Tuesday of the month at 3:30 pm

Contact Kelly Timchak for more information:

kelly@currywatersheds.org



South Coast Watershed Council

4th Thursday of the month at 3:00 pm

Contact Miranda Gray for more information:

miranda.gray@currywatersheds.org



CURRY WATERSHEDS PARTNERSHIP STAFF & CONTRACTORS

Cathy Boden, Foodshed Education Coordinator

Liesl Coleman, Curry Soil and Water Conservation District Manager

Barbara Grant, NRCS Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technician

Miranda Gray, South Coast Watershed Council Coordinator

Matthew Hubbard, Field Technician

Drew Harper, Riparian Management Coordinator

Erin Minster, Technical Coordinator

Robbie Lascheck, Monitoring Coordinator

Statia Ryder, Youth Education Coordinator

Mary Spini, Administrative Assistant

Matt Swanson, Contracted Restoration Project Manager

Kelly Timchak, Lower Rogue Watershed Council Coordinator

Dustin Williams, Vegetation Management Program Project Implementation Manager

Acknowledgements

Funding for the work mentioned above has come from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land Management, Wild Rivers Coast Alliance, US Forest Service, and Oregon Department of Forestry.



29692 Ellensburg Avenue

Gold Beach, OR 97444

(541) 247-2755 | info@currywatersheds.org

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Curry Watersheds Partnership includes the Curry County Soil and Water Conservation District, the South Coast and Lower Rogue Watershed Councils, and the Curry Watersheds Nonprofit, working together to support our communities to care for our lands and waters, now and into the future. We rely solely on grants and donations and you can make a donation by visiting our website or contacting us at the information listed above.