

Beginning January 2018, this seasonally-offered educational Weed Bulletin is now a partnership between Whidbey Island Conservation District and Island County's Department of Natural Resources.



# WEEDS OF WINTER

## 2018/19



Washington's noxious weed law (*RCW 17.10*) requires landowners, as well as city, county, and state land agencies to control or eradicate certain weeds that occur on property in an effort to maintain the ecology and economy of Washington's landscapes.

**View Island County's Noxious Weed List at <http://bit.ly/2I18V19>**

For past Weed Bulletins, visit: [www.whidbeycd.org/weed-bulletin.html](http://www.whidbeycd.org/weed-bulletin.html)



### QUESTIONS?

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[www.facebook.com/islandcountynoxiousweedprogram/](http://www.facebook.com/islandcountynoxiousweedprogram/)

Visit Island County Noxious Weed Control Board for more information  
[www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/DNR/Noxious-Weed/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/DNR/Noxious-Weed/Pages/Home.aspx)




## Giant Hogweed

*Heracleum mantagazzianum*  
[www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/giant-hogweed](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/giant-hogweed)



**Reproduces by seed, forming dense canopies.**

- Habitat:** Forest understories, forest edges, disturbed sites, freshwater areas.
- Profile:** 15-20 ft. tall perennial with hollow stalks & stems that are hairy with reddish-purple blotches. Leaves up to 5 ft. in width. Umbel-like flower clustered up to 2.5 ft. wide. Similar but larger in appearance to native flora Cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) & Palmate coltsfoot (*Petasites palmatus*).
- Why?:** Root system destabilizes slopes, increasing erosion potential. Sap can cause pain & skin lesions similar to burns. Always wear gloves.
- Control:** Manually pull young plants – always wear gloves! Biocontrol agents may include cattle and pigs. Apply a broadleaf herbicide when plant is young.

**Class A**




## Gorse

*Ulex europaeus*  
[www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/gorse](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/gorse)



**Aggressive-growing, woody perennial.**

- Habitat:** Roadsides, bluff slopes, grasslands.
- Profile:** Up to 10 ft. tall & 30 ft. wide perennial with dense growth habit. Similar to Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*). Yellow pea-like flowers bloom Dec. – Mar. Angular stems with terminal thorns. Leaves have three thin leaflets that become "spiny" as they mature. Hairy seed pods turn green to brown.
- Why?:** Outcompetes native plants. High oil content in plant & dense growth habit increase fire intensity potential in drought-prone summers.
- Control:** Dig up small infestations. Mowing, combined with herbicide application, has shown success. Goats eat gorse seedlings. Chickens eat gorse seed. Consult Noxious Weed Coordinator.

**Class B**

### BE SAFE!

The biggest step to success in noxious weed removal is to always use the correct gear & protection:

- Long pants & shirts** – Protect your body from exposure to potential rashes, abrasions, & harmful weed material.
- Proper tools** – A pitchfork, Hori Hori, and weed wrench are tools that allow us to work smarter & safer.
- Protective glasses** – Especially if a weed-eater or plants that release caustic fluids are involved.
- Good gloves** – To protect from caustic substances, sharp thorns, or parts of plant.

**Noxious weeds thrive in a variety of habitats.** Refer to the icons below to become familiar with the habitats of local noxious weeds, which can help you recognize and monitor weeds on your property.



Forest Understory

Open Spaces

Marine & Shoreline


Freshwater Areas

Garden Escapee

## Parrotfeather

*Myriophyllum aquaticum*  
[www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/parrotfeather](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/parrotfeather)



**A freshwater perennial – an aquarium-escapee – detrimental to local aquatic habitat.**

- Habitat:** Ponds, streams, canals, & freshwater bodies.
- Profile:** Rhizomatous stems up to 16 ft. long. Leaves on stems whorled (4 to 6 whorls) and feather-like. Small inconspicuous white flowers on submerged stems. Looks similar to Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*). Last known Whidbey population found on south end of island.
- Why?:** Contributes to diminishing freshwater ecosystem function through dense matting & water flow inhibition. Potential increased habitat for mosquitos.
- Control:** Only proven method of eradication has been chemical. Please consult Noxious Weed Coordinator if found.

**Class B**