



Broombusters Invasive Plant Society



Broom quickly takes over empty fields and  
clear cut forest land.





Broom will grow rapidly on any disturbed soil.  
**In the sun – broom wins.**

*Parksville Interchange #46*



Broom has spread widely down utility corridors and power lines.  
With prolific, long living seeds, the broom then spreads  
onto private and public land.



## What's Wrong with Scotch Broom?

Scotch broom is an **ALIEN** invasive plant

Spreads rapidly and densely ... Anywhere in the sun

Forms dense thickets

Crowds out native plants

Leads to a dramatic loss of diversity

Slows and prevents forest re-growth

Causes allergies

**Highly flammable**

Toxic to grazing animals & wildlife

Changes soil chemistry

Makes farmland useless

Prolific seeds stay viable for 30-40 years

# Forests in Danger



Broom in utility corridor spreading deep into this young forest

Young forests struggle as fast growing broom strangles young trees, competing for sun, water and nutrients.

Oregon estimates losses over \$47 million each year in lost timber sales because of Scotch Broom.

It is difficult for our forests to grow back in balance & good health.



## Broom takes over vacant lots & unused land



Vacant lots and private property owned by absentee owners become quickly covered with broom. This is especially true of land purchased for speculation and future development.



## Broom strangles native species





## Broom Grows Large Quickly



Broom can grow to over 6 feet tall in a few years.

Fortunately, big Broom dies easily when cut. Don't panic. Don't pull.



## Broom Spreads Rapidly

Broom is an ALIEN in our ecosystem with no natural checks. A single plant can produce 18,000 seeds which remain viable in the soil for 30-40 years.





# Two Myths

We can't stop broom. FALSE!

We can stop broom, but we have to do it right!  
CUT BROOM IN BLOOM, at ground level.  
Don't disturb the soil. Don't mow. Don't dig.  
Pull tiny broom – cut bigger broom.

Broom is naturalized. FALSE!

Broom WILL continue to take over –  
like it has in Australia, New Zealand, Spain,  
Portugal, Brazil, Croatia, on and on.

We must stop it while we can.





**"Scotch Broom is a  
volatile flash fuel..."**

Photo of a controlled  
burn of Scotch Broom  
In Powell River



# FIRE HAZARD !!

"Scotch Broom is a volatile flash fuel - particularly with the mature plants.  
The presence of Scotch broom will increase a wildfire's fuel load and escalate the fire's intensity, compromising fire situations and making them more difficult to fight."



Dry broom in summer.



Terry Peters  
Fire Chief of Powell River, BC



Island Hwy  
Comox Valley



**FIRE HAZARD !!**



Old Land Fill

This is what broom looks like in summer.  
Hotter, drier, longer summers will intensify the fire danger.

**“Two invasive species cause fire behaviour  
& control concerns: broom and gorse.”**

Quoted from website of The Coastal Fire Service 2015



# Now Communities and Residents are taking action!



Broombuster Communities  
as of 2017:

Qualicum Beach

Parksville

Nanaimo

Lantzville

Comox, Courtenay

Cumberland

Campbell River

Port Alberni

North Cowichan

District of Highlands

Powell River

Ladysmith

Gabriola Island

Sayward



Port Alberni

Ministry of Transportation



## Qualicum Beach ~ 2006



Broombusters started in Qualicum Beach & Coombs in 2006.



Parksville ~ 2008



Campbell River ~ 2013

Lantzville ~ 2013





# Nanaimo ~ 2008



VIU Students





# Clearing Top Bridge Regional Park Cliffs with the help of Arrowsmith Search and Rescue







# North Cowichan

2013

Maple Bay, Chemainus  
South End, Kiwanis Club  
And more





# Comox Valley

Cumberland, Comox  
Courtenay – Since 2009





# Some ideas for City Participation

## *Consider - BROOM REMOVAL*

Participating municipalities dispose of the broom cut by volunteers

## *Consider- SIGNS*

Signs inform the public, make a statement & invite participation.

## *Consider - PUBLIC STATEMENTS*

Let the public know that the city wants to stop the spread of broom, using media, signs, and shared events.

## *Consider - PUBLIC EVENTS*

## *Consider - DROP ZONES*

## *Consider - BY-LAWS*

## *Consider - Encourage City Workers to Cut Broom*



# Broombusters Key Strategies:

*Empower the Community*

*Think - CUT BROOM IN BLOOM*

With loppers, at ground level, in late April – May.

Do not pull. Just cut. Do not disturb the soil. No need to poison.

*Think - CONTAINMENT*

Go after advancing edge & new infestations first.

*Think - STOP THE SPREAD*

Create shade. Preserve trees & groundcover.

Prevent seed formation but cutting all yellow flowers.

*Think - COOPERATION*

Residents, government, media, ministries, businesses.

Let it be known – we are all working together with one goal.

Stop the Bloomin' Broom!



# The Two Greatest Threats to Biodiversity Worldwide

1. Development
2. Invasive Species



We are the only ones who can protect our islands.  
To do so, we need more participating communities!





The Reason Why We Cut Broom...  
For FUTURE GENERATIONS

Can You Help?  
Contact Broombusters

