

WEED FILE: BROOM

REVISED: JUNE 2017



DESCRIPTION

Broom – *Cytisus scoparius*

Broom is a woody deciduous shrub with many branches of ridged green stems that have very sparse numbers of very small leaves. Indeed some stems can be entirely leafless.

It grows throughout New Zealand, and is most commonly found in and around riverbeds, on low fertility hill country and forest areas, as well as the margins of grazing land. It can form extremely dense thickets, and although it is not as spiny as gorse can still make movement very difficult or impossible for stock. It is tolerant of cold conditions, and can be readily found at high altitudes and southerly latitudes.

Broom has very attractive golden-yellow flowers in spring (and sometimes later), which are followed by the emergence of explosive seed pods. The flowering normally follows that of any gorse in the same locations, and can be distinguished at distance due to being a lighter yellow than the gorse flowers.

The leaves, in addition to being both sparse and small, are trifoliolate in form. They fall from the stems very easily.

There is a similar species, Montpellier broom, which is distinguished by having many more leaves and smaller flowers.

MANUAL/MECHANICAL CONTROL

Small plants can be dug or grubbed out, but this should be done before fully-developed seed pods are present, to prevent accidental release of seeds onto the disturbed ground. Small bushes can also be slashed and the area cultivated, especially if heavy grazing can follow to clean up seedling growth.

Goats can also provide reasonable control of broom by grazing, especially smaller and seedling growth.



HERBICIDE CONTROL

Because of the scarcity of leaves on broom, there is generally less than ideal leaf area to receive and take up sprayed herbicides. This has led to reports of disappointing results with some sprays, including metsulfuron (e.g. MSF600). However, not everyone agrees with this, and many users report perfectly satisfactory results. Most of the reports are from the South Island, which could indicate a regional resistance of broom to that herbicide.

In all cases spraying is most effective at the time of maximum leaf cover. This usually occurs in spring and early summer.

Stump Swab:

Broom cut by chainsaws and scrub cutters will usually regrow from dormant buds on the stumps, so treatment of the stumps with herbicide is essential.

- **MSF600** at 5g/L water swabbed onto fresh cut stumps.

Spray:

- **Triclo** at 300ml/100L water plus 100ml **SuperWetter** organosilicone penetrant, applied by handgun; or **Triclo** at 10L/Ha plus 2L **SuperWetter** in 400L water by aerial spray.
- **GrassMate** at 250ml/100L water plus 100ml **SuperWetter** organosilicone penetrant, applied by handgun; or **GrassMate** at 10L/Ha plus 2L **SuperWetter** in 400L water by aerial spray.
- **MSF600** sprayed by handgun at 35g/100L water, plus 100ml **SuperWetter**, or by air at 300g/Ha **MSF600** plus 2L **AirWet LF** in 400L water
- **Glyphosate 360** sprayed by handgun at 1L/100L water plus 100ml **SuperWetter**, or **Granny** at 450g/100L water plus 100ml **SuperWetter**.