

Cytisus scoparius

Family name: **Fabaceae**
Scientific Name: ***Cytisus scoparius* (L.) Link**
Common names: **Skotse besem; Scottish broom**

Weed Status: *Cytisus scoparius* is a category 1 invasive plant in South Africa.

Plants that are officially classified as weeds are divided into three categories. There is an exception in the regulations regarding biological control reserves. These are areas where permission is granted for declared plants not to be controlled because they are used for introducing and monitoring biological control agents (e.g. insects).

Category 1 declared plants (Section 15A of the amended act):

- may not occur on any land or inland water surface other than in biological control reserves.
- must be controlled by the land user on whose land or inland water such plants are growing.
- may not be planted or propagated.
- may not be imported or sold; and
- may not be acquired.
- can be exempted from the above regulations through written exemption from "the executive officer", provided there is a good reason for it.

Control requirements:

Individual plants and small infestations: Totally control (remove/destroy) individual plants

Large infestations: Contain existing infestation (s) and decrease the weed incidence by implementing a control programme directed by local authorities.

Sale: Do not sell or knowingly distribute *Cytisus scoparius* plants.

Control Methods/ Techniques:

Manual: The manual/mechanical removal, and burning or disposal at an approved landfill, of plants is the most effective. Be sure to remove all plant parts and fruit. As much of the root system as possible should also be removed. Several broad spectrum herbicides can be used for this species. Triclopyr, imazapyr, aminopyralid and glyphosate can be applied alone or in combination with 2,4 – D.

Indigenous replacements:

Optimum months for control:

Plan period

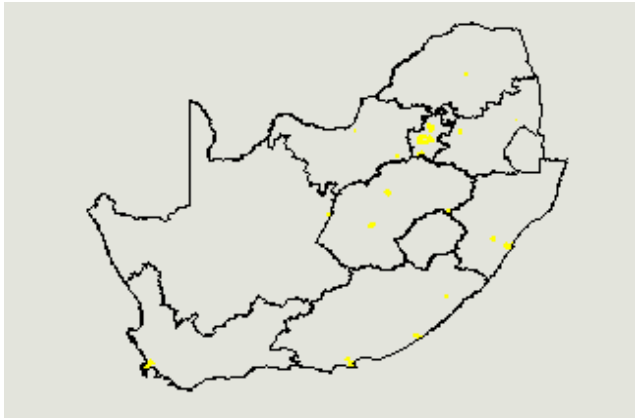
Start date:

Completion date:

Area of origin: Europe, including Britain

Habitat: Grassland, forest margins, roadsides. It does not do well in forested areas but invades quickly after logging, land clearing and burning.

Known distribution in South Africa



Environmental/ economic impact:

Current: Competes with and replaces indigenous species. Reduces grazing potential of the land. Poisonous. The readily decomposable litter it produces causes a fire hazard.

Plant characteristics:

Life span: Perennial

Growth form: Woody shrub, up to 4m tall

Leaves: Alternate - Dark green, 8-15 mm long, three-foliolate, but upper leaves often reduced to one leaflet, deciduous.

Flowers: Bright yellow, 25 mm long, mostly solitary or paired, axillary – September to March.

Fruit: Legume - Brownish-black pods, 35-50 mm long, glabrous except for silky hairs at the margin.

Thorns: None

Poisonous: Yes – the fruit

Animal usage: None

It is used as a hedge and ornamental plant. Within a year *C. scoparius* can develop into 3 feet tall dense thickets. *C. scoparius* bushes can produce up to 60 seed pods per bush by their second year and 300 to 7,000 seed pods every next year. However, about half of the seed produced is viable. The plant is drought and fire tolerant, but not shade tolerant.



Applicable legislation:

The Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, No. 43 of 1983, as amended in March 2001,

- This act explains the regulations about the control of weeds and invasive plants in South Africa. See also section 15A of the amended act

The Biodiversity act (100 of 2004)

The National Veld and Forest Act (101 of 1998)

The National Water Act (36 of 1998)

The National Environment Management Act (104 of 1998)

The Agricultural Pest Act (36 of 1983)

Private landowners:

Government/ municipal land:

References and sources:

AGIS WIP Website (www.agis.agric.za/wip)

U.S.A. Department of Agriculture <http://www.usda.gov>

