

DESERT BROOM



The desert invader

An opportunistic weed is overtaking the Southwest! Desert Broom, or *Baccharis sarothroides*, is a nuisance, shrub-like weed with broom-like stems that can reach 12-foot tall heights. Homeowners unfamiliar with native plants often mistake Desert Broom for an ornamental shrub. This invasive weed can crowd out other plants, steal valuable water and clog roadsides and retention areas. Desert Broom blooms later than most plants and generates countless cottony seed mounds, which affect allergy sufferers. Knowledge is the best ammunition against Desert Broom.



The Desert Broom utilizes the water source of its host.

Where to look

While Desert Broom tends to grow in open areas, it also grows in the middle of another plant, especially if there is irrigation to the plant.

While it is difficult to spot this weed growing amid other foliage, it will inevitably overtake other plants. You will then see broom-like branches protruding

above the top of the host. The earlier you recognize Desert Broom the better your chance of removing it since it grows an extraordinarily long tap root as it matures.

How to get rid of Desert Broom

The best way to kill a Desert Broom plant is to pull it out of the ground by its roots as a youngster. You should not trim Desert Broom as it will continue to grow back and become increasingly more established. Additionally, any root left in the ground can potentially regenerate a new plant. If you find an established Desert Broom, cut it all the way to the ground and apply RoundUp concentrate directly to the fresh cut. RoundUp works best during the warmer months of the year. If you identify a Desert Broom during the cooler months, cut it back to stop its growth, wait until spring arrives, make a fresh cut and apply RoundUp.

Did You Know?

The Trailing Desert Broom (*Baccharis* hybrid) is a shrub related to the Desert Broom. However, this ground cover plant rarely grows over 18" tall and produces no seeds.

