



OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE

OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL NAMES 100 WORST INVASIVE SPECIES TO KEEP OUT OF OREGON IN 2009

SALEM, Oregon—They can run, but they can't hide—not from the Oregon Invasive Species Council, anyway.

Last week, the Council named the 100 Worst List for 2009, a list of 100 of the worst invasive species to keep out of Oregon this year. The list is updated and produced annually to promote a watchful eye on those invasive species capable of causing the greatest harm to Oregon's economy and natural resources.

There were several changes made to the list since 2009.

The only change to the aquatic plant category was the addition of flowering rush, a plant that could eventually spread through much of the Columbia River Basin. This non-native species was introduced to the East Coast over 100 years ago and quickly spread through the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes region and waters in New England, displacing native riparian vegetation and interfering with boat traffic. Only within the last 60 years has it been found in the western states, but it has the potential to spread widely to a variety of valuable freshwater habitats. Large infestations in Montana, Idaho and Washington pose a real risk of this species spreading downstream to non-infested areas in Oregon. Additionally, this species continues to be widely marketed as an ornamental pond plant, posing another possible vector for introduction.

In the land plant category, two plants were removed and three were added. Mile-a-minute weed was removed because this species is not listed in either Oregon or Washington. Portuguese broom was removed because it was "the one that got away" in 2008. This plant continues to be a high priority on Oregon's forested lands, however, programs focused on this species have moved from eradication to containment mode.

White bryonia, goat's rue, and oblong spurge were added to the list in the land plants category. White bryonia is a vigorous herbaceous perennial vine resembling kudzu, an imported plant from Japan that now covers over 7 million acres in the southeastern United States. Infestations will overgrow and smother small trees and shrubs, forming dense mats that show out the vegetation upon which it grows. Populations are documented from southeast Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Montana. Should this species become established in eastern Oregon, it poses a huge threat for forest and range land as well as the ecosystems of the Hells Canyon/Snake River areas.

Goat's rue is a USDA federally-listed noxious weed. A member of the legume family, it was introduced into Utah in 1891 as a potential forage crop. It escaped cultivation and now occupies over 60 square miles in Cache County, Utah. Goat's rue infests cropland, fence lines, pastures, roadsides, waterways, and wet, marshy areas. In addition, this plant is unpalatable to livestock, and toxic in large quantities. It is particularly lethal to sheep.

Oblong spurge is a weedy escaped ornamental species that was found in Salem, Oregon. Suspected to have been introduced from California in contaminated flax or machinery that was used at the State Penitentiary flax mill in the early part of the 1900s, it has slowly expanded its territory on penitentiary property. Oblong spurge grows up to three feet tall, and is capable of forming dense stands in more arid climates.

The aquatic invertebrate category lost and gained a species in 2009. One aquatic invertebrate—Assiminea—was removed from the list in 2009 because of the increasing widespread establishment of this brackish water estuarine snail. However, this snail was placed on the 2008 list with little understanding of the current range of the species at the time.

And red swamp crayfish was lumped with the existing rusty crayfish, expanding the number of non-native crayfish in this category.

Two species were removed from the land invertebrate category, and two species of land snails were added to the existing White garden snail. Pine shoot beetle was removed because new information indicates it does not present a threat to forest ecosystems, including Christmas tree plantations. And sawyers were removed because of lack of information to support their existence as a major threat to Oregon's forests. The vineyard snail and heath snail were lumped with the White Garden snail in 2009 because of their potential as pests to a number of agricultural commodities as well as their potential as vectors of human and animal parasites and plant diseases.

Two fish were added to the fish category, all goby species were lumped, and black carp was lumped with Asian carp. Threadfin shad are native to the south-central United States and were introduced to Arizona and California as forage baitfish for warm water fish species, such as largemouth bass, crappie, and walleye. Threadfin shad feed on zooplankton and are copious breeders.

Golden shiners are native to the eastern United States and have been introduced as baitfish, ornamental, and forage fish. Golden shiners compete with native Oregon fish for food and habitat, and have caused significant problems in Diamond Lake and other locations.

No changes were made in the bird, mammal, and reptile categories.

In the micro-organism category, cherry leaf roll and pear trellis rust were removed because pear trellis rust is established in Washington, is a manageable disease, and is not fatal to its host. Cherry leaf roll is found in Oregon, however, it has failed to move to cherries, and like pear trellis rust, the damage it is capable of causing is significantly less than other species added to the list in 2009. These species include blackberry yellow view disease, blackberry yellow vein-associated virus, and blackberry virus as well as bacterial blight of grape.

The Council will track the 100 Worst List species throughout 2009 and report on the success Oregon has in preventing these species from becoming established in the state during the year.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2001. Its mission is to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon. Current members of the council hail from the Oregon Marine Board, USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Gilliam County Weed Department, Port of Portland, City of Portland - Bureau of Environmental Services, and DLF International, Inc. In addition, agency representatives include the Oregon Department of Forestry, Center for Lakes and Reservoirs at Portland State University, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Sea Grant at Oregon State University, and Oregon Department of Agriculture.

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