

SPECIES: *CYTISUS SCOPARIUS*

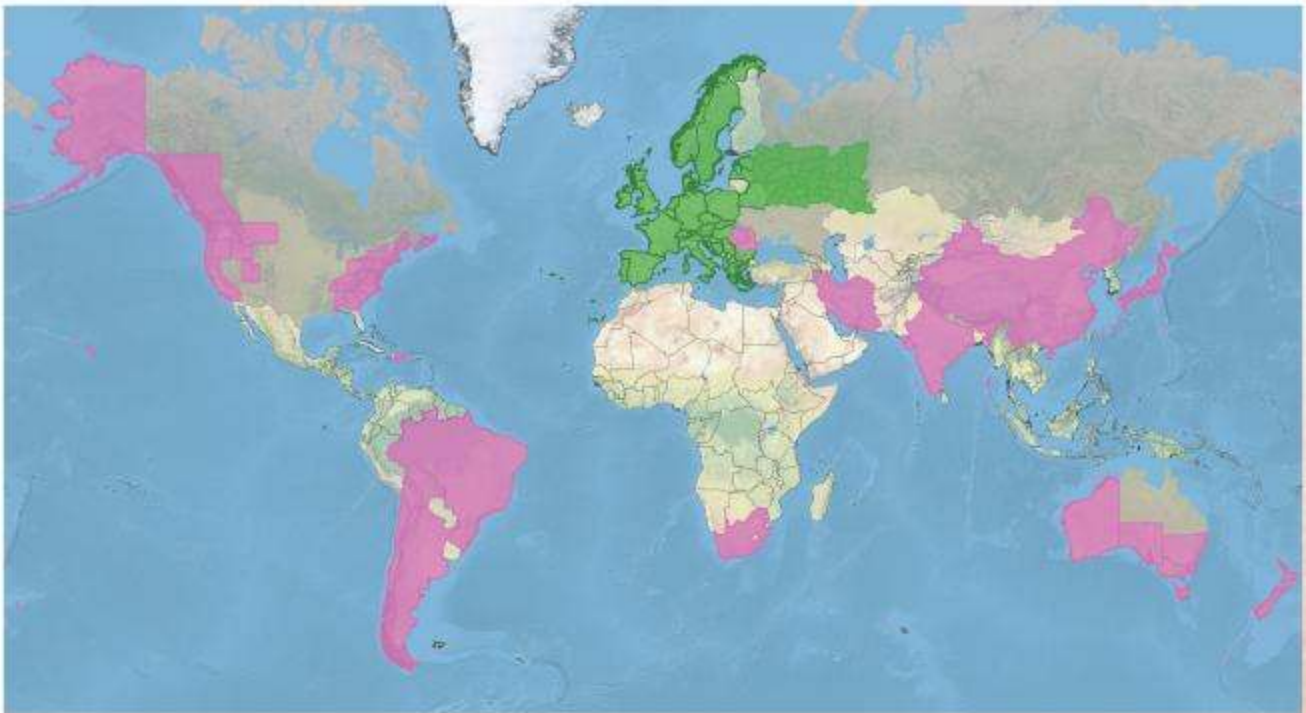
COMMON NAME: SCOTCH BROOM

FAMILY: FABACEAE

Plant Description

It is a perennial shrub. It is commonly observed at high elevations in the Western Ghats (e.g., in shola grasslands of the Nilgiris). It can grow up to 3 m tall. The stems are green in colour, with branches that are five-angled. The leaves are usually tri-foliate. They are ovate with narrow ends and fairly small (0.5-2 cm in length and about 0.5 cm wide). It flowers from around February onward. The flowers are solitary, pea-like and bright yellow-coloured. The fruit are pods that are green, becoming black upon maturity, and with hairy margins. The plant bears a resemblance to the gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), which also occurs in the same habitats. However, unlike gorse, the Scotch broom lacks spines.





CABI, 2022. *Cytisus scoparius*. In: Invasive Species Compendium. Wallingford, UK: CAB International. <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/17610> #toDistributionMaps [accessed: 25/01/2022]

■ Introduced
■ Native
■ Origin not recorded

Cytisus scoparius FABACEAE

Origin: Western and Central Europe

Introduction: The plant was introduced to India in 1924 as an ornamental and hedge plant. It was also tried out as a plant for afforestation in high-elevation grasslands.

Impacts: A single plant produces thousands of seeds. The seedlings germinate in disturbed habitats, and fires, especially, stimulate seed germination. The establishment of Scotch broom thickets negatively affects other plants, and a decreased diversity of native plants is observed in invaded areas. It affects ecosystem processes by altering fire regimes and nutrient cycling.

Management: Mechanical removal is partially successful in adult patches, but this does not remove the persistent soil seed bank. Very intense fire is also used to manage Scotch broom patches (light fires help promote seed germination), but can only be used in habitats that are highly fire resistant.