

SPECIES: *ULEX EUROPAEUS*

COMMON NAME: GORSE

FAMILY: FABACEAE

Plant Description

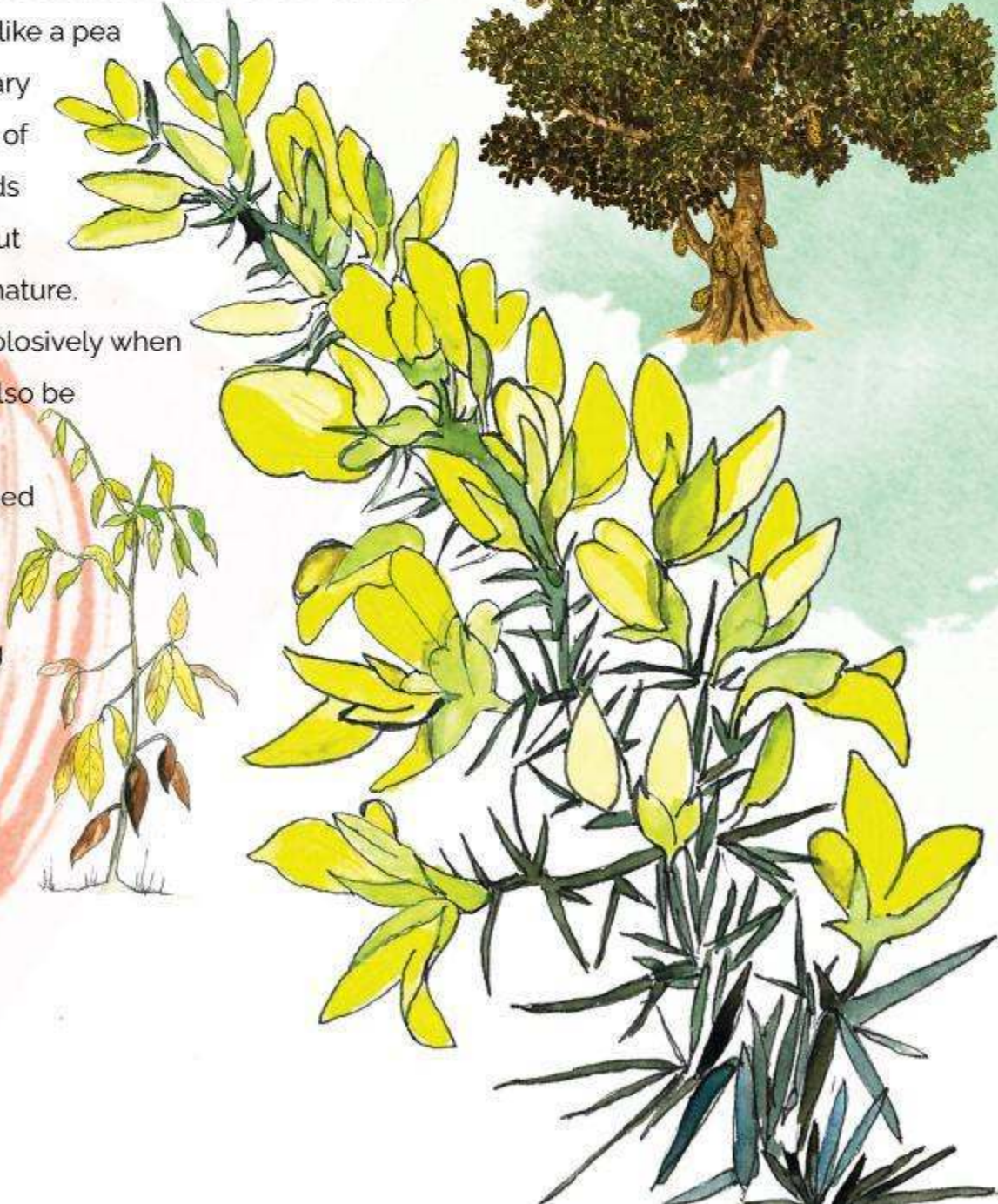
It is a perennial woody shrub. It grows usually up to a height of 3m, but can also grow as a low prostrate shrub under grazing pressure, or in exposed, windy conditions. The stems are green with scattered hairs. The surface of the stems is waxy, with spines arranged alternately. The leaves are reduced in size, inconspicuous, and are located at the base of the spines.

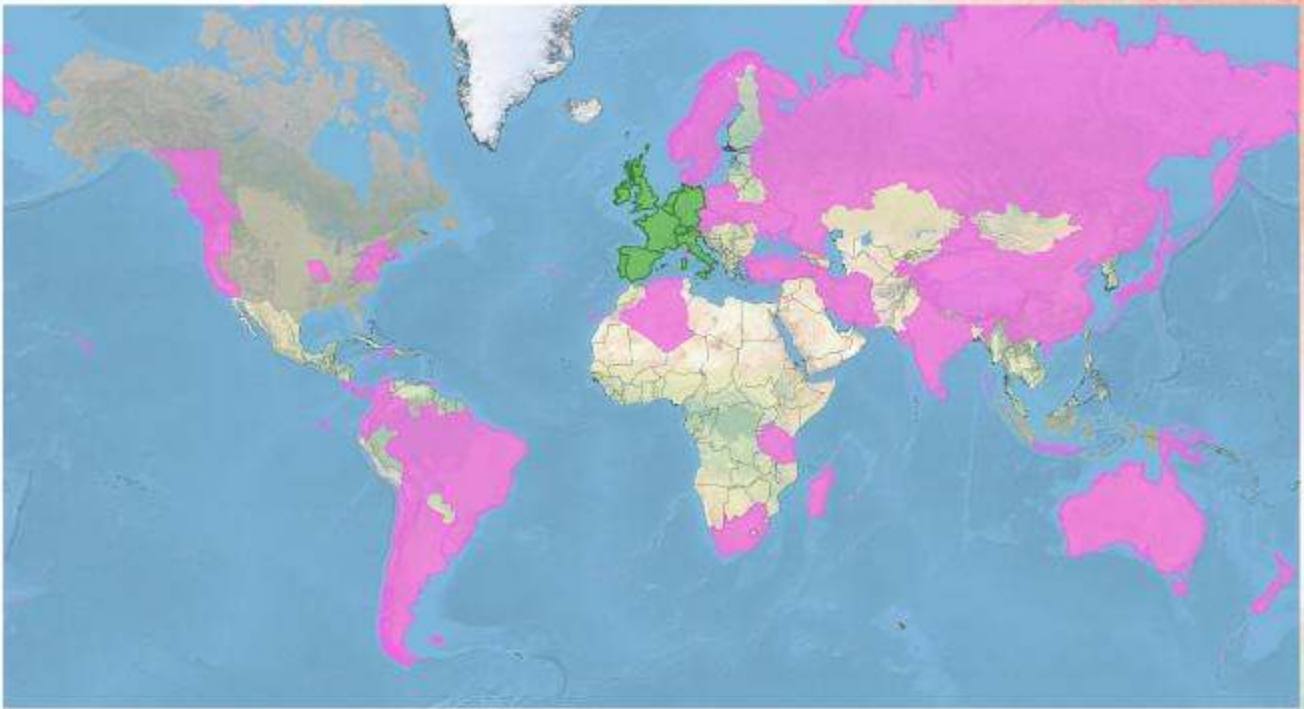
Flowers are yellow, and like a pea flower. Flowers are solitary or in clusters in the axils of stems. The fruits are pods that are green initially, but become black as they mature.

Seeds are dispersed explosively when pods open. Seeds can also be transported by water.

The dense thickets formed provide fuel for fires.

The plant is able to regenerate by coppicing from burnt stems. Fires also encourage regeneration from seed.





CABI, 2022. *Ulex europaeus*. In: Invasive Species Compendium. Wallingford, UK: CAB International. <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/55561> #toDistributionMaps [accessed: 25/01/2022]

■ Introduced
■ Native
■ Origin not recorded

***Ulex europaeus* FABACEAE**

Origin: Western Europe

Introduction: It was introduced to India as an ornamental plant.

Impacts: It grows in open areas, such as the high elevation grasslands in the Western Ghats, forming dense stands. The thickets formed prevent regeneration of other species below them. Reports from other parts of the world indicate that it can acidify the soil beneath it, thus also preventing native species from regenerating. It can also encourage fire incidence.

Management: Various ways to mechanically remove the plant (mowing, cutting, etc.) have been tried in other countries, but the results have been variable. Several biological control agents have been used to varying degrees of success in New Zealand and Hawaii. As *U. europaeus* is shade-intolerant, planting trees to suppress its growth has been attempted in some parts of the world.