

## Obscure Weeds Discussion Group - 2006 Cal-IPC Symposium

**Group Facilitator:** John Knapp, Catalina Island Conservancy

**Group Leaders:** Joe Di Tomaso, U.C. Davis, Carri Pirosko, CDFA, John Randall, The Nature Conservancy

**Note Taker:** Gina Darin, U.C. Davis

Introductions- Who, affiliation, and location.

How to search for control information on an obscure weed – Joe DiTomaso.

- The first thing to do (before calling an expert) when faced with an obscure weed is to be an Internet detective. These are the four main avenues Joe DiTomaso uses to find information about obscure weeds, and plus a few additions from group attendees:
  1. Internet
    - “Google it,” i.e. “plant name” or “scientific name” or “genus” and “control.”
    - Global Invasive Species Database – based in New Zealand and gives literature citations, [www.issg.org/database](http://www.issg.org/database).
    - Global Compendium of Weeds – literature on control, [www.hear.org/gcw](http://www.hear.org/gcw).
    - The Nature Conservancy’s Invasive Species Initiative – species summaries that focus on control (select species need to be updated), [tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/esadocs.html](http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/esadocs.html).
    - Aliens listserv - maintained by the IUCN (to join that listserve, send the message "subscribe Aliens-1" to [listadmin@indaba.iucn.org](mailto:listadmin@indaba.iucn.org)).
  2. CalWeedTalk – a listserv run by Cal-IPC focused directly on information about California. To subscribe, send a blank e-mail to [californiaweedtalk-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:californiaweedtalk-subscribe@topica.com).
  3. Interview people who have done the work, herbicide representatives are a wealth of information.
  4. Try controlling the weed yourself – test different methods and send this anecdotal information out (on CalWeedTalk) so others can use it, too.

You may need to use information on related species when there is none available for your particular species.

Obscure Weeds of Interest and the Group’s Experience with Control Techniques.

- Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*) - not so obscure as it’s found throughout the state. Controls discussed were transline, glyphosate, milestone (newly registered), cutting (although it does resprout). Lincoln Smith discussed a biocontrol agent, the weevil *Rhinocyllus conicus*. Cathy Voth discussed training cows to graze it, which sets back seed production. Mow before seed production and graze a week later. Flaming tiny seedlings didn’t work too well. Cut at the soil after bolting before flowering.
- Arum root (*Arum italicum*) – found in Chico, San Francisco Presidio, Marysville. Roundup was said not to be effective control. Mechanical methods spread it. Cut off bulbs as soon as they show, sieve two feet deep in the soil for bulbs, takes three years to clear one square meter.
- Smilo or rice grass (*Piptatherum mileceum*) – found in Santa Monica Mountains, southern California, Channel Islands, Sonoma, does move inland. Roundup was

noted to both be effective and only kill above ground biomass, but not the plant. Cutting makes it prostrate. Dig it out at the end of summer when the roots die back. Fusillade II herbicide at young plant stages.

- Japanese dodder (*Cuscuta japonica*) – found in seven counties including Sacramento, Shasta, LA and the Bay Area. Remove host – controversial due to killing mature oaks and trees of value. Many attendees felt that this was not a viable option. Is it possible to kill the vine and not the host tree? Many felt this is a high priority area for research.
- Velcro weed (*Torilis arvensis*) – found in San Luis Obispo county and Channel Islands. Goats will graze it. Glyphosate, dicamba, 2,4-D.
- Mexican hair grass (*Stipa tenuissima*) – Monterey. Hand pull.
- Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*). First cut berries and collect in trash bags, then dig out the plant getting the base or it will resprout.
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum canariense*) – found in San Mateo, San Juan Capistrano, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Nevada counties. Dig it out, shallow roots. Can't use Weed Wrench because it has multiple stems. Hack with Pulaski on backside and pull down.
- Mattress wire-weed (*Muhlenbeckia complexa*). Cut the biomass and wait for resprouts. Follow-up with herbicide. Found at Lands End in San Francisco.
- Buffel grass (*Pennisetum ciliare*) – found in San Diego, Imperial and Riverside county. Used as a forage species. Hand pulling. Herbicide treatments.
- New Zealand Spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonoides*)- Hand pulling effective. Found on Catalina Island.
- Other species discussed but not in-depth: African malacolinia, *Conicosia pugioniformis*, scarlet wisteria, reed grass, onion weed, calla lily, fluellin, and herb Robert.