

English Ivy Removal in Redwood National & State Parks

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In 2000, Redwood National and State Parks was awarded a grant from Natural Resources Preservation Program (NRPP) in support of a three-year project to remove English ivy and other shade-tolerant exotics from the northern portion of the parks.

English ivy (*Hedera helix* L. (Araliaceae)) is an evergreen vine native to Europe, but widely planted as an ornamental. This shade-tolerant plant is well adapted to the mild, wet environments near the coasts in Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.



The best way to get rid of ivy is to pull it, and its roots, by hand. Crews start at the edge of an infestation and move toward the center. Tree-climbing vines are cut at waist level, and the lower section peeled back; the upper vines in the tree are left to die. On the ground, vines and roots are grubbed out by hand. In either case, ivy is removed from the site or covered with a tarp, otherwise it will re-sprout. Areas cleared of invasive plants are revisited periodically to pull re-sprouts from any root pieces missed the first time. Native plants usually re-establish, making planting unnecessary. **Late winter/early spring removal** yields the fastest native species recovery.

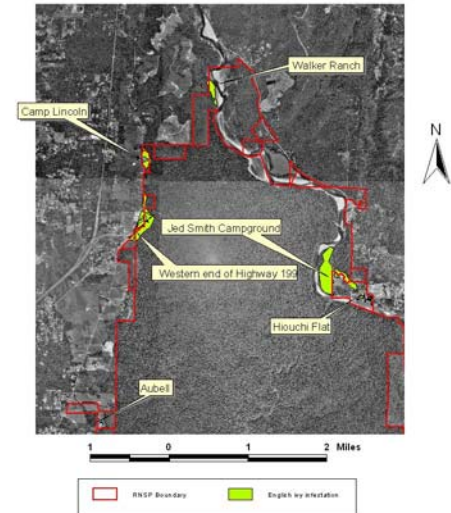
Pacific blackberry (*Rubus ursinus* Cham. & Schldl.) sprouting in an area cleared of ivy.



April (above, just before removal) and July 2002 (below) along Walker Road; note dead ivy vines in trees



English Ivy Infestations in Jedediah Smith and Hiouchi Areas of Redwood National and State Parks



Ivy aggressively invades natural areas. Vines carpet the forest floor, choking out native plants and turning wildlife habitat into a potential haven for non-native rodents and snails. Ivy also twines up into the trees, increasing the possibility of blowdowns and smothering shrubs and saplings. It poses such a threat to our forests that in 1994 Redwood National Park declared it a high-priority species for control.

FIRST: Know your infestations.

Where, how big, and how heavy are they?

Are any of them reproductive?

SECOND : Set your priorities.

Sever fruiting aerial vines from the ground to cut off reproduction.

Begin with the lightest infestations in the most intact areas.

THIRD: Run circles around that ivy!

Start at the edge of an infestation and move toward the center.

Move to another edge so the cleared area can recover.

Return to pick resprouts in a few months' time.



Redwood forest before and 2 years after removal

By the end of 2003, **100 acres** of old-growth redwood forest and adjacent habitats were **cleared of English ivy**, cotoneaster, and English holly. Of these, approximately 85 acres were revisited for resprout removal one or more times. These forest habitats are well on their way toward recovery and restoration to a native-dominated understory.



The clearing of a hundred acres begins with a single vine.

A total of **24,135 person-hours** were spent in the field pulling exotics; the total budget for this project was \$405,136. Dedicated staff of the National Park Service, California State Parks, California Conservation Corps, California Department of Corrections, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection all contributed to the effort.