

### **Non-native Invasive Plants in some Kirkwood Neighborhoods**

Some Kirkwood neighborhoods are experiencing the spread of Scotch Broom, a non-native species that will crowd out the native vegetation if not controlled. Also identified in the Kirkwood Valley is Yellow Sweet Clover, Mullein, Bull Thistle (not to be confused with Anderson Thistle!) and St. John's Wort, all non-native, invasive species.

The important biological difference between invasive plants and garden weeds is the ability of invasive plants to disperse, establish, and spread without human assistance or disturbance. Because of this, they are much more problematic in natural environments than are typical weeds.

#### **Naturalized Defined**

"Invasive" and "naturalized" are terms used frequently in reference to both non-native plants in wild land areas and to garden plants. The term "naturalized" is used to describe a non-native plant that is capable of surviving and reproducing without human intervention for an indefinite period. Naturalized plants that do not spread away from where they were introduced are not generally a significant problem either in a garden or in a natural habitat. However, naturalized species that do spread and survive in new areas are called invasive plants.

#### **Invasive Defined**

Invasive plants cause ecological disruption to natural ecosystems, but the severity of the impact varies considerably based upon the plant species and the area being invaded. The worst invasive species have caused substantial changes to the character, condition, form, and nature of the invaded habitat. In scientific literature, these species are sometimes referred to as landscape transformers.

Fortunately, at the elevation of Kirkwood the plants are not quite as vigorous. However, the seeds of the plant can remain dormant in the soil for years and can sprout at any time when conditions are favorable. The dormant seed can be transported in soil used as fill only to sprout and propagate when the soil reaches its new location. The seed, already dormant in the soil, can be activated when soil is disturbed during construction. It is commonly found thriving around the foundations of homes constructed in the last several years. If the pods are allowed to open and distribute seed before they are removed, another generation of the plant and further spread is assured. Because the seeds are long lived in the soil it is necessary to remove the plant for several consecutive spring seasons to completely eradicate the plant on your property.

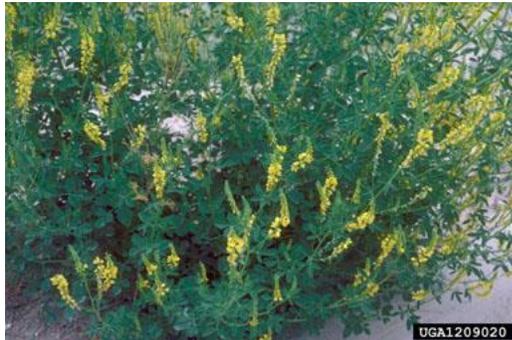
#### **Scotch Broom**

<http://www.moplants.com/scotch-broom-a-goldrush-plant-invader/>



**Sweet Clover**

<http://www.invasive.org/browse/detail.cfm?imgnum=1209020>



**Mullein**

<http://www.invasive.org/browse/detail.cfm?imgnum=1120270>



**Bull Thistle (Not to be confused with Anderson Thistle!)**

<http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/detail.asp?weed=36>

[http://tahoeinvasiveweeds.org/resources/pdf/brochure\\_thistles.pdf](http://tahoeinvasiveweeds.org/resources/pdf/brochure_thistles.pdf)



Bull Thistle



Anderson Thistle

**St. John's Wort**

[http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/pg\\_hype.pdf](http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/pg_hype.pdf)

