



FRIGHTENING FACTS

South Carolina and North Carolina Exotic Plant Pest Councils



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *TAMARIX* SPP.
COMMON NAME: SALT CEDAR
KNOWN TO OCCUR IN SC AND NC

WHAT IS SALT CEDAR?

Plant Type: Deciduous woody shrubs; several species are known to occur in the U.S. including *Tamarix africana*, *T. chinensis*, *T. gallica*, *T. parviflora*, and *T. ramosissima*. All are invasive and appear similar.

Form/Size: Can grow to 15 feet and forms dense thickets.

Leaves: Scale-like, gray-green in color, 1/16 in. long, overlap along the stem, and often encrusted with salt secretions.



Flowers: pink to white in 2 inch long spikes densely clustered at branch tips.

Fruit: Tufted capsule filled with thousands of 1/25 inch seeds.

Means of Spread: Vegetative growth through adventitious roots or submerged stems and sexually through the production of thousands of tiny seeds per flower. Seeds dispersed by wind and water. Seedlings require extended periods of soil saturation for establishment.

Family: Tamaricaceae



WHERE DID SALT CEDAR COME FROM?

Origin: Western Europe and the Mediterranean to North Africa, northeastern China, India, and Japan.

Date of Introduction: early 1800s.

Reason: introduced to the western U.S. as an ornamental shrub. Found planted on SC and NC coastal properties.



WHERE AM I LIKELY TO FIND SALT CEDAR?

Habitat Type: Disturbed and undisturbed habitats including stream banks, bottomlands, natural and unnatural water bodies, wet pastures; tolerates highly saline soils and alkali conditions.

Distribution in SC: *T. gallica* (French Tamarix) found on coast

Distribution in NC: *T. gallica* found on coast

Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species



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WHY IS SALT CEDAR A PROBLEM?

Environment: - Long taproots enable salt cedar to access and interfere with natural aquatic systems and monopolize limited water resources.

-High fire tolerance can alter fire ecology of natural communities by increasing the frequency and intensity.

-Displaces native plants reducing diversity and altering wildlife habitat structure; provides little food value for wildlife.

Economy: -Control methods can be expensive and difficult

-increased fire intensity can damage homes, timber, and properties, *Tamarix* infestations intensify drought effects because of high transpiration rate, reduces recreational usage of natural areas.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND SALT CEDAR?

Report: take a photo, report the observation to EDDMapS: <http://www.se-eppc.org/> (location, size of infestation, etc.). *In SC:* Send digital photo to John Nelson at the USC Herbarium: plantman@herbarium.org for verification.

Control: a combination of manual, mechanical and chemical is most effective. Flooding, where root crowns are submerged for at least three months has been effective. Re-establish native vegetation after removal. Research of several biological control agents is underway.

Disposal: no information

CURRENT LISTINGS:

SC EPPC: Watch B/Shrub, GA EPPC: Category 2

State Noxious Weed in CO, ID, ND, MT, NE, NM, NE, SD, TX, WY

LEARN MORE!

- Invasive.org (images):
<http://www.invasiveplantatlas.org/subject.html?sub=6515>
- Plant Conservation Alliance:
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/tama1.htm>
- USFS Fire Effects Information System:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/tree/tamspp/all.html#FEDERAL%20LEGAL%20STATUS>
- The Nature Conservancy Global Invasive Species Team::
http://wiki.bugwood.org/Tamarix_spp

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