



## Invasive Shrubs Found in Seattle's Parks

Seattle Urban Nature Project (SUNP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the quality of life in the Puget Sound Region by engaging communities to improve urban forests. Since 1999, SUNP has surveyed and monitored habitat conditions on public lands in the Seattle area. For more information about our current or past projects, please visit [www.seattleurbannature.org](http://www.seattleurbannature.org).

**Himalayan blackberry** (*Rubus discolor*) and **Evergreen blackberry** (*Rubus laciniatus*) form thick stands of impenetrable shrubs which exclude all other plants. SUNP's survey of public lands in Seattle in 2000 showed Himalayan blackberry to be the most invasive plant in Seattle's forests. These shrubs produce tasty berries which are spread by birds all over the Pacific Northwest.



Himalayan blackberry leaves (above) and berries (right)



Evergreen blackberry leaves  
(Image © 1999, Clayton J. Antieau)

**Scotch broom** (*Cytisus scoparius*) is an invasive plant commonly found in disturbed areas and along roadsides. It is one of the top five invasive plants found in Seattle's urban forests. A member of the pea family, the seed-pods eject seeds up to 20 feet away.



Scotch broom

**Spurge laurel** (*Daphne laureola*) is an evergreen horticultural shrub introduced from Eurasia. Spurge laurel can establish in the shady forest understory, where it competes with native vegetation. This shrub is spread by birds who eat the berries.



Spurge laurel  
(Image © 2005, Ben Legler)

**Butterfly bush** (*Buddleja davidii*) is a very popular garden plant which has escaped into natural areas. This shrub is common along roadsides and disturbed areas in King County. The seeds are spread by wind, birds, animals and people who brush up against the plant.



Butterfly bush  
(Image © 2004, Ben Legler)

**Cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster spp.*) is a popular landscaping shrub which grows in low-light conditions in our forests. It produces berries in the winter and attracts birds which disperse the seeds. This plant has the potential to displace native shrubs.



Cotoneaster