

U.S. National Early Detection and Rapid Response System for Invasive Plants

EDRR Fact Sheet

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Common Name: Saltcedar

Scientific Name: *Tamarix ramocissima* Ledeb.

Family: Tamaricaceae

Description: An evergreen shrub or small tree that can grow up to 30' tall. **Leaves** small, scale-like, gray-green in color, overlapping along the stem. **Bark** smooth, reddish on younger plants, brown and furrowed with age. **Flowers** pale pink to white, in dense spike-like plumes, spring to late fall. **Fruit** a capsule with tiny (0.04" in diameter) seeds; the capsule has a tuft of hair that aids in dispersal by wind. **Reproduction** is by seeds that are spread by air and water, as well as root expansion. Each plant can produce up to 600,000 seeds annually.



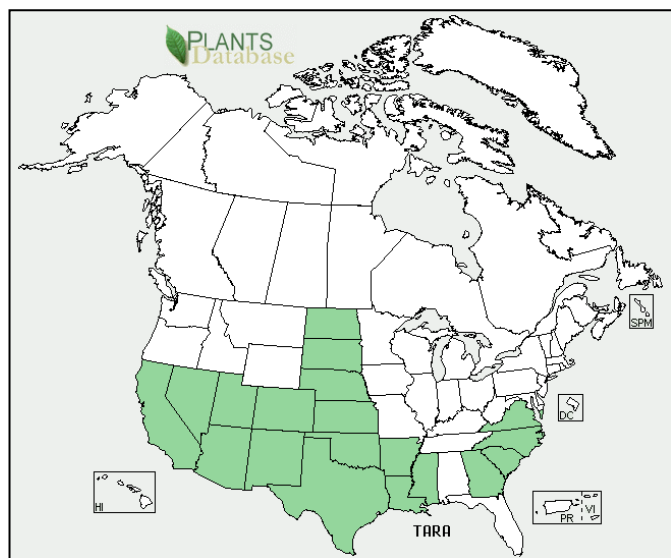
Habitat: Saltcedar invades streambanks, sandbars, lake margins, wetlands, moist rangelands, and saline environments. Seedlings require exposure to saturated soil for extended periods of time to become established. It prefers moist environments, but can be found in dry soils as well. It can grow on highly saline soils up to 15,000 ppm soluble soil, and can tolerate alkali conditions as well.

Native Range: Eurasia and Africa.

Pathways of Introduction and Spread:

It is thought that Saltcedar was first introduced into the eastern U.S. as an ornamental plant in the early 1800. It now occurs throughout the central and western U.S., but is most problematic in the desert Southwest. The seeds are spread long distances primarily by air and water.

U.S. and Canada Distribution:



Ecological and Economic Impacts: Salt cedar has long taproots that enable it to invade streambanks, sandbars, lake margins, wetlands, and other environments with a high salt content. It crowds out native riparian species, diminishes early succession habitats, reduces water tables, and interferes with hydrologic processes. Saltcedar degrades native wildlife habitat by outcompeting and replacing native plants, monopolizing limited sources of moisture, and by increasing the frequency, intensity, and effects of fires and floods.

Manual Control: Hand removal of Saltcedar (hand-pulling, digging, root-cutting, weed eaters, Machetes, axes, and etc.) is recommended for small infestations of saplings that are less than 1” in diameter. Root-cutting and bulldozing of larger infestations is somewhat effective, but is costly, labor intensive, and may lead to resprouting. Fire has been used with limited success since the plants often resprout after a fire. Flooding can be used to control the plant if the root crowns remain submerged for at least three months.



Image: Saltcedar on Pawleys Island, South Carolina. April, 2005.

Chemical Control: Saltcedar can be effectively controlled with general purpose weed killers such as glyphosate ([Roundup](#) and others) or brush killers such as triclopyr ([Garlon](#) and others). The aquatic formulation of glyphosate ([Rodeo](#)) should be used if the infestation is near water.

Biological Control: A number of insects are being tested for biological control of Saltcedar. Two of these, a mealybug (*Trabutina manipara*), and a leaf beetle (*Diorhabda elongata*), have been approved for release.

Regulatory Status: Saltcedar is regulated as a state noxious weed in [Colorado](#), [Montana](#), [Nebraska](#), [Nevada](#), [New Mexico](#), [North Dakota](#), [Oregon](#), [South Dakota](#), [Texas](#), [Washington](#), and [Wyoming](#).

Online Resources:

- Saltcedar Images - U-GA Bugwood Image Gallery.

URL: <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=6515>

- Saltcedar Fact Sheet – USDA Forest Service - Weed of the Week Series.

URL: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/saltcedar.pdf

- Saltcedar Profile – Texas Invasives.

URL: http://www.texasinvasives.org/invasives_database/detail.php?symbol=TARA

- Saltcedar Profile - USDA Plants Database.

URL: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=TARA>