

SACRAMENTO WEED WARRIORS - How are we removing Red Sesbania?

Sacramento Weed Warriors conducts weed removal work groups every month. Community volunteers of all ages are participating on the first Saturday of each month. SWW provides the necessary tools and gloves, an orientation, and supervision at each of these events.

SWW volunteers are using hand tools to remove sesbania, including weed wrenches, loppers, saws, and shovels. Tarps are used to haul the vegetation off the river to reduce seed dispersal and regeneration of seedlings.



In cooperation with the American River Parkway Foundation's Adopt a Mile Stewards program, interested volunteers will receive hands-on training to recognize and remove sesbania seedlings. With its distinctive oblong leaflets and horizontal root system, sesbania plants are easy to identify and remove.

Following training, stewards will be searching for and removing seedlings during personal outings to the river. A sustained community stewardship effort will be essential to prevent the re-establishment of mature populations of this highly invasive weed.

What can YOU do?

- **Do not plant Sesbania anywhere!**
Use alternative plants in your garden. If you find sesbania being sold, please contact us.
- **Report sightings**
If you detect this plant along a Sacramento waterway, please notify us.
- **Join a Sacramento Weed Warriors work group**
We conduct a community work group on the first Saturday of every month. Additional community service projects and tours are organized for interested schools, youth groups, neighborhood associations, etc. Contact Frank Wallace for more details about upcoming events. More information about this stewardship project is online at www.sacvalleycnps.org.

How to contact us

Within the Sacramento Area

Frank Wallace, Project Director
Sacramento Weed Warriors
Tel: (916) 213-4682, Email: frankw2@pacbell.net

Outside the Sacramento Area

Robin Fallscheer, Central Valley Bay-Delta Branch
California Department of Fish and Game, Stockton
Tel: (209) 948-7163, Email: rfallscheer@delta.dfg.ca.gov

Sacramento Weed Warriors (SWW) is a community stewardship initiative of the California Native Plant Society-Sacramento Valley Chapter. Many local organizations, including the American River Parkway Foundation and the Sacramento Urban Creeks Council, provide support. SWW is currently receiving funding to implement the Community Stewardship Component of the American River Parkway-Invasive Plant Management Project (ARP-IPMP). During Phase 1 of this long term project, IPMP professional crews and SWW volunteers are removing 5 invasive plant species located on 650 acres in the Parkway. On a long term basis, SWW will be responsible for monitoring more than 800 acres to be sure that new seedlings are treated or removed before more seeds are produced.

The American River Parkway-Invasive Plant Management Project is funded by grants from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, California Department of Transportation, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. The project is administered by the Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Loran May and Associates is the project manager.



An environmental stewardship project of the California Native Plant Society-Sacramento Valley Chapter

Red Sesbania

(*Sesbania punicea*)

**Scarlet Wisteria
Rattlebush**



Invasive Weed Fact Sheet

Special thanks to Supriya Mody for the graphic design.

What is Red Sesbania?

- Red Sesbania (*Sesbania punicea*), also called Scarlet Wisteria or Rattlebush, is native to South America. It is a woody shrub that grows to 15 feet in height. The trunk of mature plants can reach 6 inches in diameter.
- Sesbania has distinctive drooping oblong leaflets arranged in opposite pairs.
- Clusters of bright red flowers emerge in late spring and are produced until fall.
- Mature sesbania plants produce hundreds of 4-sided seed pods. The pods are green and yellow early in the season eventually turning dark brown, remaining on the plant in winter.



Why is it a problem?

- Sesbania is rapidly forming dense stands along rivers & creeks in the Sacramento region. Sesbania clusters are often so thick that access to the river is impossible.
- Sesbania is displacing native plants that provide essential food and shelter for a wide variety of wildlife species.
- Sesbania contains saponin, a chemical that is poisonous to both humans and wildlife.
- Along shallower streams, clusters of sesbania are spreading into the waterways. These tall obstacles can contribute to bank erosion and increase the chance of flooding.
- Expert ecologists believe that sesbania is a major threat to the biodiversity of native plants in riparian habitats (the sensitive areas immediately along the edge of waterways), throughout the Sacramento region.



How does it spread?

- Numerous seedlings are sprouting in moist areas along the American River and creeks in the Sacramento region. These rapidly mature and add to the mass of seed-producing plants.
- As the number of plants multiply, millions of seed pods are produced. Massive numbers of pods fall directly into the river and can float miles downstream to start new infestations.
- Early sprouting sesbania plants can mature in one season and begin producing seed pods.



Where does it come from?

- Red Sesbania comes from southern South America - Argentina and Paraguay.
- Sesbania was brought to California as an ornamental plant probably because of its long flowering period and its profuse bright reddish flowers. It still may be sold in some nurseries in the Sacramento region.
- Sesbania also occurs from Florida to Texas along the gulf coast.