

CONTROLLING RUSSIAN OLIVE SEEDLINGS ON YOUR PROPERTY

If your property was treated as part of the watershed-wide effort to remove Russian olive, you're fortunate. Your land is back to a point in time before this weed was introduced to America. This flyer is designed to help you develop an annual maintenance plan to keep it that way. Keeping your land free of this weed is not a difficult task; it just requires diligence and a dedication to **catching the seedlings when they are young and easy to kill.**

RUSSIAN OLIVE WILL:

- Decrease the value of your property
- Displace native vegetation
- Decrease wildlife diversity
- Form impenetrable thickets



This weed is a highly successful colonizer of our canyon bottoms, fence lines, & irrigation ditches. One mature tree will annually shed 1000s of olives, which wildlife & water spread to other locations, making this both a local and regional problem.

PHOTO: Russian olive sprouts.

Weeds have no boundaries, and this particular weed can grow up to 6' per year. Although it tolerates both flooding and drought, it prefers moist soils where it can consume vast amounts of water and form dense thickets. It does well in the shade and this is why it replaces native vegetation: ***A Russian olive can grow in the shade of a cottonwood tree, but a cottonwood cannot grow under a Russian olive.***

An effective way to kill Russian olive sprouts is with herbicide in combination with cut stump, girdle, or frill cut. A cut stump or girdle without the use of herbicide may be effective, but if the seedling has grown for a year you are likely to see re-growth from the root mass if herbicide is not used.



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RUSSIAN OLIVE: AN ANNUAL MAINTENANCE PLAN

Having a plan for monitoring and killing Russian olive is the best way to keep your land from becoming invaded.

Methods

Cut Stump & Herbicide

This method of killing small Russian olive sprouts involves cutting the growth at ground level and *immediately* applying herbicide. Cutting very low to the ground reduces stump growth & applying herbicide directly to the cut stump minimizes the use of herbicide necessary to effectively kill the tree and prevents overspray. This method is very effective.

Frill Cut (also called partial girdle or hack & squirt) & Herbicide

If you find a Russian olive that is too large for pruners or loppers, an axe or hatchet can be used to make frill cuts. This method combines partial girdling with herbicide treatment. Make a series of downward chops with a hatchet or axe, leaving projecting “frills” of bark. The frills are staggered so the tree is not fully girdled, & thus will continue to send food (& herbicide) to the roots. Herbicide is applied into each frill. This method requires a very small amount of herbicide, minimizing the risk to non-target species.

Tools

Personal

Protective

Equipment



Herbicide

Glyphosate and imazapyr are effective herbicides for control of Russian olive. Both are nonselective herbicides and, if proper care is not taken, can injure surrounding, desirable vegetation. Each herbicide product is labeled for protective equipment requirements, directions for use, precautions & restrictions, & mixing rate based on target species and application method. Be prepared to read and follow the labeled instructions. Both herbicides are sold under various brand names and can be found at hardware stores.

Always on the lookout!

You may run into a Russian olive sprout when out doing something else. If the seedling is small, don't hesitate to try pulling it out of the ground, girdle it or chop it off with the tools at hand—a shovel or pocket knife.