

## Some Nasty New Non-Natives

New and interesting natives aren't the only things that we've found lately. One of the grim new findings came to us from Kristen Hopper, the former FOSC nursery manager. In July 2011, she found a very invasive annual grass called goatgrass (*Aegilops triuncialis*) near the nursery. The Bay Area Early Detection Network (BAEDN) lists it among their priority plant invaders and has been advising us on its management. *Aegilops triuncialis* not only invades native grasslands, but it is capable of invading native serpentine grasslands, which is significant as serpentine grasslands are critical habitat for numerous rare and endangered fauna and flora in California. Species found growing on serpentine are specially adapted to growing in its nutrient-poor soils and few invasive species are able to survive there. Locating it and removing it now, before it spreads, is key to preventing a major infestation in the area.



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The area where it was found wasn't grazed last summer, which it usually is as part of the Wildfire Prevention District's fuel reduction plan, so we handpicked all the seed heads we could find in the dense stand of other annual grasses. But we couldn't find it all, so there's much more goatgrass this year than last. The goats have arrived for their summer grazing of the park and should hit the site before this year's seed has a chance to ripen. The plant is described as "unpalatable to livestock," so we'll soon learn whether the nearly omnivorous goats are fussy about eating this pest.



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Jeff Greenhouse found another nasty invader, stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*), near the FAA tower north of Chabot Space and Science Center. This large annual in the aster family produces a lot of seed and can spread rapidly. It has a late bloom period, so we'll need to send a weed-warrior strike team to catch it before it spreads.

Besides goat grass, we have found several other BAEDN priority species in the watershed. There is Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) near the El Centro trout pool. Martha Lowe found it long ago, but we had lost track of it. FOSC Restoration and Nursery Manager Megan Hess has had crews working on it, but it resprouts from the roots so constant vigilance is needed. We knew we had giant privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) in Dimond Park and Joaquin Miller Park, and Jeff has been finding additional evidence of this plant. He has also identified African asparagus fern (*Asparagus asparagoides*) along the west segment of Sunset Trail and hairy wallaby grass (*Rytidosperma penicillatum*) near the south end of the Sequoia-Bayview Trail. We also have drooping sedge (*Carex pendula*), which someone initially identified for FOSC as a native sedge, but we recently learned that it is another nasty non-native.

Some resources for learning about invasive plants:

- ❑ California Native Plant Council ([www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org)) provides good descriptions and management advice on many of our most troublesome invasive plants.
- ❑ Bay Area Early Detection Network ([www.baedn.org](http://www.baedn.org)) focuses on finding and eradicating new invaders before they become big problems. Check out their photo-illustrated guide to their priority species, and contact [field@sausalcreek.org](mailto:field@sausalcreek.org) if you think you've spotted one of these invaders in the watershed.
- ❑ Calflora ([www.calflora.org](http://www.calflora.org)) has excellent photos of many invasive plant species as well as natives.
- ❑ *Weeds of California*—The nursery has a copy of this massive, lavishly illustrated guide to invasive plants. If you have an invasive plant to ID, you can stop by during nursery volunteer hours with a sample of the plant to compare to the photographs.

--Karen Paulsell