

Gorse

(*Ulex europaeus*)



Gorse is a spiny coniferous shrub that can grow to 3 meters tall and live for 45 years. It can spread both vegetatively and by seed, where a mature plant can produce up to 18,000 seeds per year. Gorse infestations can hinder the regeneration of logged areas and increases the risk of fire due to the volatile oils the plant produces. It can outcompete native vegetation due to its large extensive thickets, increase soil erosion because of its shallow root systems and reduce access for recreation. It is most common on central and southern Vancouver Island but also occurs on a number of the gulf islands.