

# Salt Cedar (aka Tamarisk) Fact Sheet

*Tamarix racimossima*

Tamaricaceae Family



## Distinguishing Features:

- ❶ **Flowers:** Large sprays of small whitish or pinkish flowers that are born in finger-like clusters.
- ❷ **Leaves:** Leaves are very small and scaly and arranged alternatively.
- ❸ **Seeds:** Reproduces by seeds as well as vegetatively. A mature saltcedar plant can produce 600,000 seeds annually. Seeds are viable for up to 45 days.
- ❹ **Flowering Time:** April - August of its third year of growth.
- ❺ **Life cycle/ other:** Perennial. Saltcedar is a tall shrub or small tree.

## Impacts:

- Saltcedar is an aggressive, woody, invasive plant species that crowds out native stands of riparian and wetland vegetation.
- It increases the salinity of surface soil, rendering the soil inhospitable to native plant species and generally lowers the wildlife habitat value.
- It uses more water than comparable native plant communities and dries up springs and wetlands.

## Control:

- For large, essentially monotypic stands of saltcedar, the best method of control is a foliar application of imazapyr (Arsenal) herbicide. Do not disturb the plant for 2 years for full translocation of the herbicide into the roots.
- For smaller infestations, cut saltcedar stems off at ground level (within 2 inches of the soil surface) and immediately paint the cut surface with triclopyr or imazapyr. Fall applications are most effective. Resprouts should be treated 4-12 months following the initial treatment.
- The recent introduction of a biological control, the saltcedar leaf beetle (*Diorhabda elongata*) in Delta Utah, has shown very promising through rapid expansion and almost complete defoliation. Repeated defoliation by the leaf beetle after several years has resulted in saltcedar death.
- If no native vegetation exists within the area, restoration with natives is imperative to long-term management.



Robert D. Richard, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

The leaf beetle has proven to be an effective bio-control on Saltcedar infestations in Utah.



Salt Lake County Weed Control Program  
[www.weeds.slco.org](http://www.weeds.slco.org)  
801-562-6466  
weeds@slco.org