

# Washington Invasive Ranking System

Washington Natural Heritage Program

## *Cotoneaster* species (Cotoneaster)

Assessed by

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25 November 2024 (WIRS Version 1.5)

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Ecological Impact Rank: **Low** (49)

Confidence: **High** (83)

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Management Difficulty Rank: Insignificant (12)

Confidence: High (80)

Biological Characteristics of Invasiveness: High (70)

Confidence: Moderate (43)

Concern Related to Distribution and Abundance: High (82)

Confidence: Moderate (60)

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Photo Credit: Erin Burke 2024, WNHP.

### Ranking Notes

Rapid assessment only, based primarily on professional expertise.

*Cotoneaster* was assessed at the genus level because the species that occur in Washington all have similar

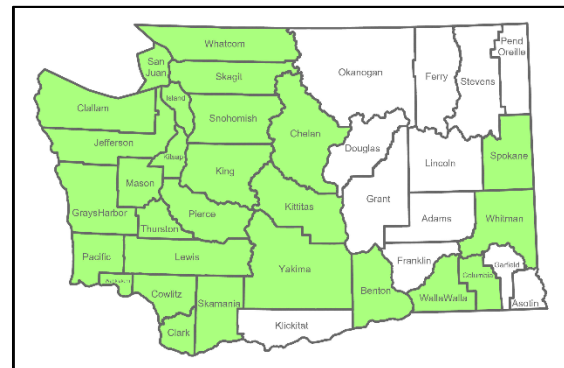
traits, habitats, and ecological effects. All species of *Cotoneaster* in Washington are introduced.

### Legal Listings

[Washington State Weed Board](#): No

[Washington Invasive Species Council](#): No

### Section 1: Distribution and Abundance



**Figure 1.** Distribution of counties where *Cotoneaster* species have been documented in Washington State (CPNWH, 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

### Q1: Current Range Size in Washington

Rating: High

Confidence: Moderate

*Cotoneaster* species are found in 69% of the Washington counties (CPNWH, 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

Source: Herbarium records and other observations

### **Q2: Current Trend in Total Range**

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q3: Proportion of Potential Range Currently Unoccupied**

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q4: Local Range Expansion or Change in Abundance**

Rating: High

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q5: Diversity of Ecosystems Invaded**

Ecosystem types: Forest & Woodland

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

## **Section 2: Biological Characteristics**

### **Q6: Aggressive Mode of Reproduction**

Rating: No

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q7: Innate Potential for Long-Distance Dispersal**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

*Cotoneaster* berries are dispersed by birds.

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q8: Potential to be Spread by Human Activities**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

This genus is widely planted in landscaping.

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q9: Allelopathy**

Rating: No

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q10: Competitive for Limiting Abiotic Factors**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Low

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q11: Growth Form**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Low

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q12: Germination Requirements**

Rating: No

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q13: Invasiveness of Other Plants in Genus**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Multiple species in this genus have established in natural and semi-natural ecosystems in Washington. A literature search turned up several sources suggesting that many species in the *Cotoneaster* genus are invasive or potentially invasive in Europe.

Source: Professional expertise

### **Q14: Shade Tolerance**

Rating: Moderate



Confidence: High

*Cotoneaster* species are somewhat less shade tolerant than other exotic forest shrubs/trees such as *Ilex aquifolium*. These species are generally observed on forest edges and roadsides, but not under closed forest canopies.

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q15: Disturbance Tolerance**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q16: Propagule Persistence**

Rating: Unknown

Confidence: Not Rated

Source:

#### **Q17: Palatability**

Rating: Yes, plant is unpalatable

Confidence: Moderate

The berries are palatable, but foliage browsing appears to be limited.

Source: Professional expertise

### **Section 3: Ecological Impact**

#### **Q18: Impact on Ecosystem Abiotic Processes**

Abiotic Processes: Light availability

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q19: Impact on Ecosystem Structure**

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q20: Impact on Ecosystem Composition**

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q21: Impact on Particular Native Species**

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q22: Observed Ability to Invade Undisturbed Ecosystems**

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

*Cotoneaster* species appear to be weeds of disturbed edges, and occasionally abandoned roadsides, but they are generally not found in undisturbed ecosystems.

Source: Professional expertise

#### **Q23: Observed Ability to Invade Naturally Disturbed Ecosystems**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

*Cotoneaster* species have been observed on slides in forested areas when seed sources are nearby.

Source: Professional expertise

### **Section 4: Management Difficulty**

#### **Q24: General Management Difficulty**

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

To date, *Cotoneaster* are generally found as individual plants, which makes the genus relatively easy to treat.

Source: Professional expertise



**Q25: Minimum Time Commitment**

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q26: Impacts of Management on Native Species**

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q27: Inaccessibility of Invaded Areas**

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q28: Sociopolitical Implications of Management**

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Additional Comments**

None

**References**

Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria (CPNWH). 2024. Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria Specimen Database. <https://www.pnwherbaria.org/data/search.php>. Accessed: December 20, 2024.

EDDMapS. 2024. Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System. The University of Georgia - Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health. <http://www.eddmaps.org>. Accessed: June 17, 2024.

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