

# Washington Invasive Ranking System

Washington Natural Heritage Program

## *Solanum dulcamara* (Bittersweet Nightshade)

Assessed by

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Ecological Impact Rank: **Moderate** (31)

Confidence: **High** (67)

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Management Difficulty Rank: High (70)

Confidence: Moderate (60)

Biological Characteristics of Invasiveness: Moderate (69)

Confidence: High (67)

Concern Related to Distribution and Abundance: High (93)

Confidence: High (90)

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**Photo Credit:** Dr. Amadej Trnkoczy 2005, used under Creative Commons license (CalPhotos, 2024).

### Ranking Notes

Rapid assessment only, based primarily on professional expertise.

### Legal Listings

[Washington State Weed Board](#): No

[Washington Invasive Species Council](#): No

### Section 1: Distribution and Abundance



**Figure 1.** Distribution of counties where *Solanum dulcamara* has been documented in Washington State (CPNWH, 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

**Q1: Current Range Size in Washington**

Rating: High

Confidence: High

*Solanum dulcamara* is documented from all counties in Washington (CPNWH, 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

Source: Professional expertise, Herbarium records and other observations

**Q2: Current Trend in Total Range**

Rating: High

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: High

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: Emergent Open Wetland, Forested Wetland

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Section 2: Biological Characteristics**

**Q6: Aggressive Mode of Reproduction**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q9: Allelopathy**

Rating: Unknown

Confidence: Not Rated

Source:

**Q10: Competitive for Limiting Abiotic Factors**

Rating: No

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q11: Growth Form**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q12: Germination Requirements**

Rating: No

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q14: Shade Tolerance**

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q15: Disturbance Tolerance**

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Q16: Propagule Persistence**

Rating: Unknown

Confidence: Not Rated

Source:

**Q17: Palatability**

Rating: Yes, plant is unpalatable

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Section 3: Ecological Impact**

**Q18: Impact on Ecosystem Abiotic Processes**

Abiotic Processes: None listed

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: Moderate

A literature review found no documented impacts to abiotic ecosystem processes (Waggy, 2009).

Source: Informal publication

**Q19: Impact on Ecosystem Structure**

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

This plant may compete with native shrubs along small creeks, but rarely occurs with enough cover to have significant impact.

Source: Professional expertise

**Q20: Impact on Ecosystem Composition**

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q21: Impact on Particular Native Species**

Rating: Not Rated

Confidence: Not Rated

Source:

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

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

*Solanum dulcamara* will establish in disturbed areas, but generally does not spread or persist without ongoing disturbance.

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

**Section 4: Management Difficulty**

**Q24: General Management Difficulty**

Rating: High

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q25: Minimum Time Commitment**

Rating: High

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

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

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

**Q27: Inaccessibility of Invaded Areas**

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

This species can grow in active channels of riparian areas such as gravel bars and log jams.

Source: Professional expertise

**Q28: Sociopolitical Implications of Management**

Rating: Insignificant

Confidence: High

This plant is poisonous and objections to management are unlikely, aside from generalized concern about herbicide use.

Source: Professional expertise

**Additional Comments**

None

**References**

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