



# Invasive Plant Species Removal: Volunteering with Sue-Meg State Park

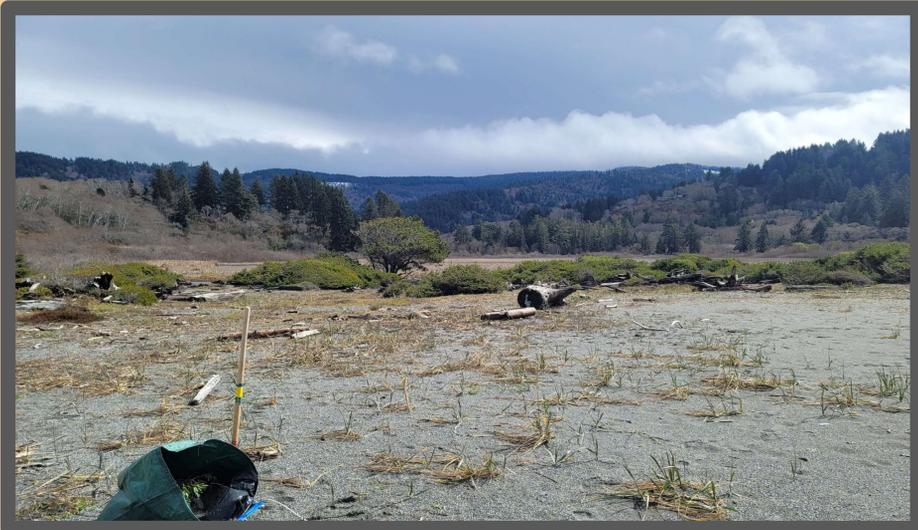
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PSCI 482



Non-native species come to Humboldt county when small patches are washed up on beaches, hitch rides on ships and cars, or escape from someone's garden. Sometimes, they're even planted deliberately, such as when CalTrans planted European Beach Grass to create stable ground for railroad tracks. Many non-native species have become commonplace in Humboldt county, most are harmless. However, some of these species are considered invasive, and rapidly take over the landscape. Once they establish, they starve native species of resources like light and water, and out-compete them for surface area on the ground. They also harm native animals by replacing their food sources, destroying their homes, and even hurting them. Keeping tabs on these invasives and controlling their spread, while meticulous and time consuming, is crucial to preserving the native habitat and environment of Humboldt.



Big Dune - Tolowa Dunes State Park, Crescent City, CA



Dry Lagoon - Humboldt Lagoons State Park, Trinidad, CA

As a long-term volunteer with the invasive plants team at Sue-Meg State Park, I assisted them with saving ecosystems in state park land across Humboldt county, between Arcata and Crescent City. I pulled invasive plants using simple tools like loppers and shovels, and safely disposed of the plants in burn piles and by bringing them out in bags. I also assisted the team in conducting Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) surveys, walking roads and trails to locate and tag invasive plants via GPS for later removal, or quickly removing them before they can spread.

## Common invasive plants pulled around Humboldt County



**European Beach Grass**

Quickly spreads along beaches and creates a monoculture, forcing out native plants. Long roots reach deep into the sand, stabilizing the dunes and preventing them from moving (a factor which is critical to the dune ecosystem). Requires a shovel or laborious hand-pulling. Pulled at Tolowa Dunes and Little River State Beach.



**English Ivy**

Quickly spreads in vines along the forest floor, outcompeting native plants while providing little for the local environment. Climbs up and attaches to trees, making them heavy and causing them to fall over in the wind. Can be removed by hand. Pulled at Sue-Meg State Park and Trinidad State Beach.



**Ripgut Brome**

Annual grass that can outcompete native plants and provides little nutritional value to animals. Animals (especially deer and elk) which ingest the seeds will damage their mouth and intestines, due to the sharp sides. Can be removed by hand. Pulled at Tolowa Dunes State Park.



**Highway Iceplant**

Succulent that spreads in coastal areas in dense mats, crowding out native plants. Small stems left behind can create massive new mats if left unattended. Can be removed by hand, but larger mats must be removed with a shovel. Pulled at Dry Lagoon at Humboldt Lagoons State Park.