

# Invasive weed threatens Calif. vineyards

By Edward Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

A new invasive weed has been expanding exponentially along roadways in the Sacramento region and the state, prompting plant scientists to warn that its unchecked growth could end up costing taxpayers millions of dollars.

The new weed, named stinkwort for its turpentine-like odor, threatens to choke out native plant species. The weed also has begun appearing in vineyards, raising a concern that it could affect the flavor of some grapes in the state's premier wine-growing region.

The low-lying weed, known by the botanical name *Dittrichia graveolens*, is a relative newcomer to the state, making its first appearance near Milpitas in 1994. It resembles a tumbleweed, and rarely grows taller than 3 feet. Its flowers are small and sport tiny yellow petals.

To the east, the weed has been seen on the side of roadways such as South Shingle Road in Placer County and in Diamond Springs in El Dorado County.

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