



## MORONGO BASIN CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

### MORONGO BASIN RESIDENTS

#### Do you have Sahara mustard on your property?

Sahara mustard is an extremely invasive weed that is threatening our beautiful desert. Those spring wildflower displays that we all enjoy so much may become history if this exotic weed is allowed to continue its spread. Our native annual flowers cannot survive the onslaught of this aggressive competitor.

#### ***Sahara mustard facts:***

- **First appeared** in North America in the Coachella Valley in 1920
- **Absent** from most wild land areas until 2005
- **Invades the desert** along roadways and washes and wherever humans travel, unwittingly carrying its seeds
- **Sprouts early** to grab soil moisture and nutrients before native annuals germinate
- **Grows fast**, blocking sunlight needed by native wildflowers
- **Produces 750 to 9,000 seeds** per mature plant
- **Increases fire hazard** due to the dried stems remaining upright for many months

#### ***How you can help eradicate Sahara mustard:***

- **Walk your property** often looking for seedlings and mature plants (especially check near your road)
- **Involve children** in the search — they have a keen eye, it's a good science lesson, and after all, it's their inheritance we're talking about
- **Hand pull seedlings**, root and all
- **Pull larger plants using gloves** (the leaves are very irritating) and using garden tools to ensure you've pulled the complete root
- **Dispose of all plant material** in a tied-off plastic trash bag — important because even a flower from a plant can take root and start again
- **Enjoy your time in the outdoors**, knowing that for each weed you pulled you've saved yourself from having to pull 1000s of weeds next year

Please pull me!



Sahara mustard seedling



Sahara mustard mature plant. Note dry stems (fire fuel) still standing from last year's plant

Removing Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) and preventing its spread in the Morongo Basin is a long-range project of the Morongo Basin Conservation Association. In addition to enlisting property owners in the battle against Sahara mustard, the association will continue to have annual "Hold the Mustard" events when volunteers can assist in pulling Sahara mustard from critical areas. For more information, visit [www.mbconservation.org](http://www.mbconservation.org).