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Gardening By John P. Begeman Special to the Arizona Daily Star Sep 28, 2008



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This certainly has been one of the most active monsoon seasons in my 13 years of living here. As a result, we have a bumper crop of weeds —very big weeds. The woody-stemmed weed that causes homeowners the most trouble is desert broom.

The best way to kill desert broom — and other woody brush — is by applying undiluted Roundup concentrate directly to cut stems at the base of the plant. This application should be made while the plant is actively growing. That's usually early spring. But given all of our recent rains, desert broom can still be effectively treated in the next week or two.

Roundup is actually the most commonly known brand name for the chemical weed killer glyphosate. It's the active ingredient in a number of herbicide products, and is one of the most effective products for our notorious desert broom.

Pour a small amount of concentrated Roundup in a plastic or foam cup. Have a small paint brush ready to apply the Roundup. Cut the desert broom stems close to the ground. Cut and treat all the stems by dabbing them with concentrated Roundup. Do this as soon as possible. Allowing the cut ends to dry before treatment will reduce the absorption and effectiveness of the treatment. The chemical will be absorbed through the cuts, into the cambium tissue and transported directly to the roots. Use up all of the Roundup you have poured out into the cup. Because of the potential for contamination, do not pour any leftover glyphosate back into the original container.

Although Roundup is the most commonly available brand of glyphosate, other herbicides containing glyphosate are just as effective. Be sure that the product you choose has a minimum concentration of 18 percent glyphosate.