



Joshua Tree National Park News Release

Volunteers Needed for 'Hold the Mustard' Campaign

Joshua Tree National Park is seeking volunteers to help with the control of the invasive Sahara mustard plant. This non-native weed is invading Joshua Tree National Park and surrounding communities. It has the potential to do lasting harm to the native desert ecosystem. This rapidly spreading annual mustard is most successfully controlled by manually pulling plants before they are able to spread seeds across the desert landscape. Joshua Tree National Park is seeking volunteers to assist with eradication efforts over several weekends this spring.

Late winter and early spring is typically the time when the desert starts to show off its colorful wildflower blooms. In recent years the profusion of yellow blossoms along park roads has often included outbreaks of exotic Sahara mustard, an aggressive invader. Sahara mustard is a non-native plant capable of crowding out native Mojave Desert annuals and creating increased fuel loads and fire danger in local vegetation.

When to meet: 8:00AM, February 25 (Saturday), March 4th (Sunday), and March 17 (Saturday)
Each weed pull event will last until approximately 1:00 p.m.

Where to meet: Oasis Visitor Center, 74485 National Park Dr., Twentynine Palms

What to bring: Water, snacks, hats, sunscreen. Tools and gloves will be provided

You can learn more about the *Hold the Mustard* project by going to the Morongo Basin Conservation Association website at: <http://www.mbconservation.org/mustard.html>. For more information about the park's weed control program, contact Katie Kain at 760-367-5575, or via e-mail at: katherine_kain@nps.gov.

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2/23/12