

Blackberry

Rubus fruticosus

Family

Rosaceae (rose)

Also known as

Bramble

Where is it originally from?

Northern temperate regions.

What does it look like?

Scrambling, very thorny, semi-erect shrub that is usually deciduous, with large root crowns and long suckers. Stems arching (occasionally semi-prostrate), entangled, green or red and occasionally taking root when in contact with the ground. Various shaped (usually cut-edged), flat leaves are arranged alternately on the stems. White to pink 5-petalled flowers (Nov-Apr) followed by clusters of black berries (Nov-May).

Are there any similar species?

Raspberry, loganberry and wild rose species.

Why is it weedy?

Forms dense, long-lived clumps, scrambles over the ground and low plants, has an extensive rhizome system, occasionally layering and seeding. Tolerates most soil types, drought and flood but is intolerant of dense shade.

How does it spread?

Mostly spread by rhizomes. Birds distribute seeds but they have a low germination rate.

What damage does it do?

Low to moderate damage in open habitats. Smothers most low growing species, inhibiting the establishment of native plant seedlings, and impedes access.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Stream and bush edges, swamps, sedge and tussock land, gumland, and other open habitats.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Physical removal - dig out small plants or excavate larger areas. Dispose or burn all plant material.
2. Cut and paste - Cut the stem/trunk as close to the ground as possible and cover the entire stump with herbicide as soon as possible after cutting. Apply glyphosate gel (120g/L strength).
3. Basal spray stems up to 20cm diameter with X-Tree Basal. Ensure the base is thoroughly covered at ground level.
4. Foliar spray (Summer to Autumn before leaves become brittle)
Apply Glyphosate (360 g/L active ingredient) herbicide (20ml/L) plus organosilicone penetrant (2ml/L) to cover entire plant Note: Non-selective. Avoid overspray onto desirable plants.
OR Apply Metsulfuron herbicide (600g/kg active ingredient) (Knapsack 0.5g/L, or Gun and hose 20-35g/100L) plus organosilicone penetrant (3ml/L) to thoroughly wet all parts of plant. Note: Metsulfuron overspray will kill other (desirable) broadleaf plants and has residual activity in the soil which aids in killing below ground parts
OR Apply Triclopyr herbicide (600g/L active ingredient) at 6ml/L plus organosilicone penetrant (1ml/L) to thoroughly wet all parts of plant.
OR Apply Picloram/triclopyr herbicide (picloram 100g/l and triclopyr 300g/l active ingredient) at 6ml/L plus organosilicone penetrant (1ml/L) to thoroughly wet all parts of plant.
Note: Triclopyr and picloram herbicides are 'grass friendly' but overspray will kill other (desirable) broadleaf plants. Picloram has residual activity in the soil which may leach through soil and kill other plants. Do not use under and around other (desirable) broadleaf plants.
5. Biocontrol - For information about biocontrol agents for blackberry, please visit:



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Trevor James



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



Photo: Carolyn Lewis

<https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/discover-our-research/managing-invasive-species/weed-biocontrol/projects-agents/biocontrol-projects/blackberry>

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Recovers quickly after slashing or grazing, rhizomes are difficult to dig out and always regrow. Native species will usually overtop blackberry if good canopy growth. Spray at least 4 months before replanting with other species.