

# Barberry

## *Berberis glaucocarpa*

### Family

Berberidaceae (barberry)

### Also known as

*Berberis aristata*, *Berberis vulgaris*

### Where is it originally from?

Himalayas

### What does it look like?

Evergreen or semi-deciduous, spiny, yellow-wooded shrub (<4-5 m). Tough, woody stems have yellowish-grey bark and very sharp, hard, single or three pronged spines (<23 mm long) where the leaves meet the stem. Leathery leaves (25-75 x 10-25 mm) with usually serrated edges often turn reddish in autumn. Clusters (<6 cm long) of smelly yellow flowers (5-7 mm, Oct-Nov) are followed by oval, reddish-black berries (7-12 mm) with a dusty white look to them and dark red juice (Mar-May).

### Are there any similar species?

European barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) has red berries. Darwin's barberry (*B. darwinii*) is similar but has bright orange flowers.

### Why is it weedy?

Long-lived and produces long-lived, well-dispersed seeds. Tolerates hot to cool temperatures, damp to dry conditions, high wind, salt, little shade, damage (not grazed) and many soil types.

### How does it spread?

Variable production of viable seed, from large amounts to none. Birds and possibly possums eat berries and spread the seeds, which are also spread by soil and water movement. Seed sources include farm hedges, roadsides, old homesteads, and plantation forest.

### What damage does it do?

Scattered plants (occasionally dense stands), replace native species.

### Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed forest and shrubland, short tussockland, and bare and stony land.

### What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Physical removal - Hand pull small plants, or dig out entire plant including roots (all year round):
2. Cut and paste (all year round) - 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 either glyphosate gel (120g/L strength) or metsulfuron gel (10g/l strength) or picloram gel (43g/l strength) to the entire cut stem.
3. Foliar spray  
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 penetrant 1ml/L to thoroughly wet all parts of plant.  
Note: Triclopyr herbicide is 'grass friendly' but overspray will kill



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Photo: Trevor James



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other (desirable) broadleaf plants.

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?**

Cut stumps resprout quickly, can be hard to kill. Seed bank reinfests bared areas so avoid non-selective spray use. Poor competitor for space, can be crowded out by planting. Follow up 6-monthly.