

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. Dig out small patches (all year round): Dispose of root crowns and rhizomes at a refuse transfer station or burn or bury deeply.
2. Stem scrape and paint with undiluted glyphosate immediately. Small patches only.
3. Cut and paint stumps: glyphosate (200ml-500ml/L). Small patches only.
4. Spray (summer-autumn, before leaves become brittle): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (7.5g/15L) or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (60ml/15L) or triclopyr 600 EC (60ml/15L).

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..



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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