

Blackberry

(*Rubus fruticosus* agg.)

Also known as: bramble, *R. laciniatus*, cut-leaved blackberry,

Is Blackberry on your property?

Blackberry is included in Horizon's Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as Boundary Control. Blackberry will largely be managed through a boundary control regime and enforcement will be request driven. Efforts to maintain clean land should be recognised and regulations enforcing boundary clearance will be adhered to. If you see any sites of infestation, please freephone 0508 800 800.



Identification

Usually deciduous, scrambling, very thorny, semi-erect shrub. Large root crowns, long suckers. Stems arching (occasionally semi-prostrate), entangled, green or red, occasional layering. Leaves alternate, variously shaped (usually cut-edged), flat. Flowers 5 petalled, white to pink, Nov-Apr, clustered drupes forming black berries, Nov-May.

Weedy characteristics

Scrambling habit. Extensive rhizome system, occasional layering and seeding. Tolerates most soil types, drought, flood. Forms dense, long-lived clumps. Intolerant to dense shade.

Methods of dispersal

Mostly slowly via rhizomes. Birds distribute seeds but low germination rate.

Impact on indigenous plants

Low to moderate in open habitats. Smothers most low growing species, inhibiting recruitment. Impedes access.

Typical habitats

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

Control

1. Spray: Escort at label rates. Summer-autumn, before leaves become brittle.
2. Dig out (small patches only). Dispose of root crowns and rhizomes, all year round

Site management

Since the early 1990s the leaf rust *Phragmidium violaceum* has caused widespread loss of vigour. Combined with insect damage to leaves and roots, this may be enough to reduce competitiveness in many sites with high native plant numbers. In habitats with terminal species over 3m, native species will usually overtop blackberry, usually with no control needed except at margins. Where control is necessary, slashing improves access preceding dense planting, but small plants may be smothered by re-growth. Spraying preferred, gives 95%+ control with negligible re-growth. Spray at least 4 months before planting.

Species recovery

Recovers quickly after slashing or grazing as crowns and rhizomes unaffected. Rhizomes difficult to dig out, always re-grows.

For more information freephone 0508 800 800.

