

# Blackberry

## *Rubus fruticosus* agg.

### Description

Scrambling, thorny perennial.

**Root:** Has a well-defined crown just under the soil surface which produces several suckers.

**Leaves:** Have 3 - 5 lobes with toothed edges. Pale underneath.

**Flowers:** Large white or pinkish flowers followed by black berries.

**Fruit:** Cluster of small berries, red turning black.

There are several sub-species which flower at different times during the spring and summer and also have very variable leaf shapes and plant forms.

### Origin

Native of Europe. Introduced to New Zealand for its edible fruit.

### Where is it found?

Blackberry grows almost anywhere where there is enough light, from pasture to pine forests.

### How does it spread?

Seeds are spread by birds.

Arching stems will root on contact with soil to produce a new plant.

### Why is it a problem?

Blackberry is a major problem for pasture often severely limiting production. Sheep can also become entangled in it. If blackberry grows over fences it can speed up their deterioration.

It also prevents regeneration of native bush where bush margins are infested.

In forestry it hampers management operations.



### Status as a pest plant in the Bay of Plenty

Blackberry is a Containment Pest Plant in the Bay of Plenty Regional Pest Management Plan.

Rules require land occupiers to destroy any blackberry on their properties that is within 10 m of any property boundary.

It is an offence under the Biosecurity Act to propagate, sell, distribute, release or spread blackberry in the Bay of Plenty.

**CAUTION:** When using herbicide please READ THE LABEL thoroughly to ensure that all instructions and safety requirements are followed.

**DISCLAIMER:** Information in this fact sheet regarding herbicides does not necessarily appear on the labels of the products concerned. Bay of Plenty Regional Council does not accept liability for any damage that may arise from the use of herbicides at non-standard rates. Mention of product trade names implies neither endorsement of those products nor criticism of similar products not mentioned.

**For more information contact a Bay of Plenty Regional Council Land Management Officer**

### How do I get rid of it?

**Pasture management:** Maintaining a vigorous, dense pasture sward and good fertility will help prevent blackberry establishing.

**Manual:** Small numbers of small plants can be grubbed (dug out) as long as the crown of the plant is removed.

**Spraying:** Spray during late spring and summer. Thorough coverage is important.

#### Recommended:

Spray with metsulfuron-methyl (e.g. Escort, Meturon, Matrix).

With knapsack or CDAX unit use 5 g per 10 L water.

With handgun use 35 g per 100 L water.

Always add a penetrant (e.g. Organosilicone or Pulse) to the spray mix. Use 10 ml for every 10 L water.

#### Or to minimise damage to pasture:

Spray with triclopyr (e.g. Grazon, Agpro triclop).

With knapsack or CDAX unit use 60 ml per 10 L water.

With handgun use 300 ml per 100 L water.

Other herbicide options are also available.

**Note:** Any rotary slashing should be left until the canes are completely dead. Burning is not necessary.

Regular follow-up treatment may be necessary for some years until the seed bank in the soil is exhausted.

