



# WANTED

## BLACKBERRY

*Rubus fruticosus aggregate*

### Glossary

#### Fruitlets

A unit of a collective fruit

#### Leaflets

One of the segments of a compound leaf.

#### Ovate

Egg-shaped.

#### Perennial

With a life span extending over more than two growing seasons.

#### Scrambler

Climber

#### Stamens

The pollen-bearing male element of the flower.

#### Succulent

Fleshy parts of a plant with a thickly cellular construction.

### For More Information

#### Contact

Eastern Hills Catchment Management Program  
Tel: (08) 9424 2222

Shire of Mundaring Bushcare Co-ordinator  
Tel: (08) 9290 6685

Shire of Kalamunda Bushcare Co-ordinator  
Tel: (08) 9257 9936



### Introduction

Blackberry was first introduced to Australia in the early 1800s for its fruit and is now is a serious weed of creeklines and wetlands, spreading into forest and woodland. It is one of the worst weeds of moist temperate Australia.

The genus is variable and it is often difficult to allocate plants to a particular species, but most are simply called *R. fruticosus*. Plants are not readily eaten by cattle, but goats will graze on them.

### Origin

A complex group of *Rubus* species introduced from Europe and adjacent areas.

### Status

Declared Weed of National Significance (WONS) and a priority weed species for the Shire of Kalamunda and the Shire of Mundaring.

### Lifeform

Perennial herb/shrub.

### Description

Semi-deciduous scrambler; up to 4 m tall with arching, prickly stems (canes).

**Leaves:** Dark green; broad; 3-15 cm long; 3-5 ovate leaflets.

**Flowers/Seedheads:** White/pink-tinged; 5 rounded petals; numerous stamens.

### Reproduction & Dispersal

Spread by seed, which are stored in the soil for up to 1 year, rooting of cane tips and lateral roots producing suckers. The latter two means of spread result in large clumps over time.

Fruit is eaten by birds and mammals (especially foxes) that may transport seeds some distance.

### Growing Habit

The stems sprawl and take root where they touch the ground, often forming dense, impenetrable thickets.

### Distribution

Coastal areas: Perth - Albany.

### Flowering Season

After 2 years of growth; spring - summer.

### Fruits

An aggregation of numerous tiny fruitlets; globe-shaped; 1-3 cm across; succulent; initially green ripening through red to black.

### Effect(s) on Ecosystem

Destabilises watercourse banks and smothers native flora. Shrubs harbour feral animals but help prevent erosion.

### Control

#### Manual Removal

Difficult to eradicate as the root system must be removed for effective control. Small infestations can be dug out when the soil is moist.

Slashing and burning is ineffective. Grazing with goats is reasonably effective, providing there is no risk of damage to native vegetation.

#### Chemical Treatment

For large infestations, different chemical applications need to be applied. Grazon will damage most broad-leaved species but is the only chemical that has provided reliable eradication.

It has little effect on grasses so the area is not left bare and this also helps to reduce seedling establishment.

Will require follow up treatment for a number of years. Replant native species after control has been achieved.

Please see "Herbicides and Pesticides" fact sheet for more information about spraying chemicals.

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