

Mason County Noxious Weed Control

Rose Family **Himalayan Blackberry** *Rubus armeniacus*

Identification Tips

- Woody shrub with thick, arching, red-purple stems and hooked thorns.
- Grows up to 15 feet tall and forms dense thickets.
- White to light pink flowers with five petals and many stamens.
- Fruit is pink-red when young, turning black when mature.
- Leaves in groups of five, sometimes three.
- Leaf is oval to round, with toothed edges.



Non-Regulated Class C Noxious Weed: Control Recommended

Biology

- Perennial shrub, leaves can be evergreen.
- Flowering in spring, fruits ripen July to August.
- Reproduces by seed or vegetatively, stem tips can root when in contact with the soil.
- Exact length of seed viability is unknown, but seeds remain viable for at least several years.
- A dense patch of blackberries can produce up to 13,000 seeds in one square yard.



Himalayan blackberry forms dense thickets, growing over neighboring plants and man-made objects.

Impacts

- Invades disturbed sites, such as logged areas and roadsides. It can also be found in greenbelts and riparian areas.
- Creates dense thickets that impede movement of large wildlife and prevents establishment of native herbaceous plants, trees and shrubs.
- May increase erosion along streams and river banks.

Distribution

- Himalayan blackberry was introduced from Eurasia, and can now be found growing throughout much of Mason County.
- Can grow in a wide range of soil types, but prefers moist, deep and well-drained soils.
- Prefers sites with full sun, but tolerates filtered or indirect light. Does not thrive in shade.

QUESTIONS? Contact Mason County Noxious Weed Control at:

(360) 427-9670 ext. 592 or patriciag@co.mason.wa.us

<https://extension.wsu.edu/mason/natural-resources/noxious-weed-program/>

What You Can Do

While there is no legal requirement for controlling Himalayan blackberry in Mason County, the Board recognizes this plant as invasive and is collecting information and providing education on control. The Board encourages and recommends control of existing populations especially in natural lands and forests.

Control Methods

A combination of control methods, carried out over multiple seasons is required to eradicate Himalayan blackberry. It is difficult to control once it has established at a site. **Contact Mason County Noxious Weed Control for more information.**

Prevention

Do not plant or transport Himalayan blackberry. Do not dump yard waste containing Himalayan blackberry in your compost or other natural areas, as plants can re-root. Avoid introducing contaminated soil and gravel to your yard. Monitor site for seedlings, and pull when found. Clean vehicles and equipment that have been used in infested areas.

Manual Control

Manual control is easiest after rainfall, when soil is loose. **Wear thick gloves and protective clothing to avoid injury.** Young plants can be hand-pulled. Be sure to remove entire root ball. For older and larger plants you can use pruners to cut stem, then use a shovel to dig out and remove the root. Take care to minimize soil disturbance. Replant area to add competition and shade out young plants.

For sites that provide important bird habitat with little alternative nearby, it is advisable to slowly remove Himalayan blackberry over the course of multiple years, and to refrain from removal projects during nesting season (mid-March to the end of June).



Himalayan blackberry is a common sight along many private roads in Mason County. Do your part and initiate control when found!

Can be confused with other blackberry species in our area!

Class C Noxious Weed
evergreen blackberry
Rubus laciniatus



Very similar to Himalayan blackberry, but with deeply dissected or ragged leaves.

Native
trailing blackberry
Rubus ursinus



Trailing shrub. Leaves in sets of three. Small, round, dusty colored stem with small hooked spines.

Mechanical Control

Repeated mowing can be an effective control method. If not repeated regularly, Himalayan blackberry can resprout into shorter and denser plants. Mulch cuttings as much as possible to avoid regrowth from stem fragments. Mowing can also negatively impact desirable vegetation. If allowed in your area, burning can be used to remove plant debris, but does not work to kill plants.

Chemical

Choose a formulation that is appropriate for your site. Follow the label exactly as written and use only at rate prescribed. Do not apply herbicide over or near water bodies.

Foliar treatment with a product containing glyphosate or triclopyr is recommended for control. A selective herbicide such as triclopyr is preferred, as it will not injure grasses. Carry out chemical control in late summer, after plant has produced fruit but before leaves start to turn yellow. Delay cutting the plants until two weeks after application to allow for translocation of herbicide.

Chemical control of blackberry should always be combined with manual/mechanical control and replanting.

Contact the Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board with questions about herbicide application.

