



Photo: Nate Woodard, 4-County CWMA



Photo: Samuel Leininger, Clackamas SWCD



## HIMALAYAN & EVERGREEN BLACKBERRY

(*Rubus bifrons* & *Rubus laciniatus*)

4-County CWMA Class C  
Oregon Class B  
Washington Class C



Photo: Samuel Leininger, Clackamas SWCD

### A Word of Caution

For any herbicide applications we urge you to work with a licensed herbicide applicator and refer to Grow Smart Grow Safe guide (<http://www.growsmartgrowsafe.org/>), or contact your county noxious weed coordinator. If any information provided contradicts the label, the label takes precedence. Always **read and follow the label** on any chemical product you are using!

### Stay Up to Date

Ongoing research is underway. Visit the 4-County CWMA website or contact your local county noxious weed coordinator for the latest recommendations to control invasive blackberry.



The mission of the 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area, comprising Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties, is to create and support collaborative weed management in the greater Portland area. For more details on our collaborative efforts in management, mapping, and outreach, please visit our website:

[www.4countycwma.org](http://www.4countycwma.org)

### Overview

Himalayan blackberry has taken over many streamsid es and natural areas in the Pacific Northwest. Many areas are now impassable to hikers and nature enthusiasts. This invasive species out-competes native vegetation and prevents the establishment of native trees and shrubs that require sun for germination.

### How to Identify

Himalayan or Armenian blackberry and evergreen blackberry are non-native invasive species that grow quickly and aggressively in the Pacific Northwest. The large **canes have five sides** in cross-section, and mature plants have **leaves in groups of five**. The white flowers bloom in summer and have five petals. **Thorns are hard, sharp, and often hooked**. Thickets grow to over 8 feet tall and brambles will overtop shrubs, trees, and narrow streams.

### Look-alikes

Trailing blackberry, *Rubus ursinus*, is a low growing blackberry native to the Pacific Northwest. It can be identified by its **weak, slightly bluish canes with 3 leaflets instead of 5**, and small, softer thorns.

### When to Remove

Manual/mechanical removal is best done **when the soil is moist prior to seed formation**. Removal can occur later in the growing season if proper follow-up maintenance is available. During late spring and summer months, it is crucial to **check blackberry thickets for bird nests** prior to removal. If you find a nest in a thicket, it's best to leave a 15 foot radius buffer around the nest and avoid using loud power tools.



Photo: Nate Woodard, 4-County CWMA

## Manual Control Method

### THIS METHOD SHOULD

#### BE USED WHEN:

- Invasion is near surface water
- Desired plants are in or around invasion
- Infestation is small
- Terrain is flat or gently sloped
- Soil is moist

### TOOLS YOU NEED:

- Sturdy gloves, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants to protect from thorns
- Tarp
- Weed whackers, loppers, hand pruners, and/or machetes
- Shovel or claw mattock

1. **PREPARE** an area to pile the blackberry. Either find bare ground or clear an area of blackberry, including rootballs. Place two layers of cardboard (compostable) or a single tarp (removable/reusable) on top of the soil to prevent plant matter from rerooting. If neither of these options is available, build a thick mat of sticks and branches. Canes may also be chipped and composted.
2. **CUT** blackberry canes into 1-2 foot long pieces using weed whackers, loppers, hand pruners and/or machetes. If left in contact with soil, longer canes may grow roots and continue to thrive. Be sure to leave canes long enough to relocate the root crowns.
3. **PILE** the bulk of blackberry canes off to one side of your site so you have clear access to the root crowns left in the ground.

4. **DIG** rootballs from the soil using shovels, or claw-mattocks. Remove as much root material as possible to decrease the amount of blackberry resprouts. Resprouts and small roots may be hand-pulled from moist soil. Throw rootballs on top of the pile of canes away from the soil or remove and compost them.
5. **PLANT** native or non-invasive plants in the control area after the bulk of the invasive plants are removed. This will help to repopulate the area with desired species and prevent new and recurring infestations.
6. **MONITOR** area for resprouts. Blackberry root fragments will continue to grow and produce new canes. After initial removal, the area needs to be managed at least twice a year to remove new growth. After 2-3 years of diligent removal, the area should be blackberry free. Be sure to monitor regularly for new infestations brought in by birds.

## Mowing Control Method

### THIS METHOD SHOULD

#### BE USED WHEN:

- There is little or no slope
- The ground is dry and firm year-round
- No desired plants are in or around invasion

### TOOLS YOU NEED:

- Brush cutter
- Quality lawn mower

1. **CUT** blackberry on initial treatment. Use a brush cutter to mow canes close to the ground.
2. **MOW** blackberry at least 4 times each year during the growing season (March-November). Continued mowing over several years will starve the roots and kill the plants, but mowing must be consistent. If blackberry is left alone for a prolonged amount of time, thickets will grow too large to control by mowing.
3. **PLANT** and **MONITOR** as described in steps 5 and 6 of the Manual Control Method. It will likely take longer than 3 years to remove blackberry by mowing alone. Do not plant until mowing has successfully eradicated the blackberry.

## Other Control Methods

Use chemical control methods only for large infestations where manual and mechanical removal becomes impractical. Please visit [4countycwma.org](http://4countycwma.org) for additional information.

Please contact your local weed program in either Oregon (<http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Weeds/Pages/CountyWeedPrograms.aspx>) or Washington ([http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb\\_county.htm](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/nwcb_county.htm)) for more information about how to control this invasive weed.