WRITTEN FINDINGS OF THE WASHINGTON STATE NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

(Updated December 1998)

Scientific Name: Bryonia alba L.

Common Name: White bryony

Family: Cucurbitaceae

<u>Legal Status:</u> Class B: (a) regions 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9

(b) region 7 except Whitman County

(c) Franklin County of region 10

Description and Variation: White bryony is an herbaceous perennial vine, 12 feet long, or more. The thick root is a light yellow. The simple leaves are somewhat triangular, alternate and broadly toothed. Upper and lower leaf surfaces have small white glands. Long curling tendrils, flowers and fruit are from leaf axils. White bryony is monoecious, male and female flowers are found on the same plant. The flowers are greenish-white, to ½" across. The fruit is a black berry, 5/16" in diameter.

<u>Economic Importance:</u> *Negative -* Bryony is a vigorous perennial vine resembling Kudzu in its habit -- forming dense mats which shade out all vegetation it grows upon. Major destructive potential to native vegetation, forest communities, and urban horticulture. Berries are toxic to humans.

Positive - Dried roots have been used medicinally.

Geographical Distribution: White bryony is native to Europe, found to northern Iran.

<u>History:</u> *B. alba* was first reported for Washington in 1975 from a site near Union Center in Whitman County. There is however an earlier record of *Bryonia dioica* from Columbia County (1972) which may in fact have been *B. alba*. Since the seeds of this species are spread by birds, it has spread extremely rapidly and is now common in Whitman, Garfield and Columbia counties, as well as being reported for Idaho and Montana.

<u>Growth and Development:</u> *B. alba* is a vigorous, herbaceous perennial vine, resembling Kudzu in its physiognomy. It generally occurs as a climber in trees and fence rows but when disseminated in an area where there is nothing to climb, it will form dense mats shading out all other vegetation. *B. alba* produces berries, that are both emetic and toxic to humans.

<u>Reproduction:</u> B. alba spreads by seed. The plant produces berries, the seeds of which are disseminated by birds.

References:

*Bailey, L.H. and E.Z. Bailey. 1976. Hortus Third. MacMillan Publishing Co., New York