



Control Options for Old Man's Beard

General Information

Old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*), also called traveler's joy, is a native of Europe and southwest Asia. This creeping plant vigorously climbs over other vegetation and structures, and can be invasive along roadsides, river banks, forest edges and fencelines, and in gardens and disturbed forests. As each plant can produce over 100,000 seeds, which are spread mainly by wind and water, this clematis can spread quickly. It also has the ability to send down roots whenever a stem node touches the ground. In addition to its invasive nature, the sap of this plant can cause blistering when it contacts skin.

Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Seedlings and small infestations can be dug by hand, although care must be taken to dispose of the plants so they cannot resprout. Pulling is best done when the soil is moist. All stems growing along the surface of the ground must be removed and all roots should be dug out to at least a depth of several inches. Aerial vines can be cut at waist height and left to die in trees. Care must be taken to ensure no stems touch the ground, as they may resprout.



Chemical Recommendations

Old man's beard can be managed using specific herbicides. Since the plant is often growing with other desirable plants, care should be taken not to injure off-target plants. When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions for rates, spraying conditions, personal protective equipment and grazing intervals. Do not spray when it is windy or raining, or when rain is forecast. Herbicides should not be sprayed within 60 feet of water bodies and creeks, without further consultation with the Noxious Weed Board. Remember, it is the herbicide applicators responsibility to apply the product in accordance to the instructions on the label.

Old man's beard can be controlled using an herbicide containing *Glyphosate* (e.g. Round Up®, KillZall®, many other brand names). Applications may be made as a foliar, basal-bark or cut-stump treatment. As this plant is often growing over desirable vegetation, a foliar treatment (spraying the leaves and stems) is often not feasible. In such cases, cut-stump (cutting the vines at the ground and applying herbicide immediately to the stem), or Basal-bark (removing a section of the bark and applying herbicide to the exposed stem) may be more practical. Pay careful attention to label instructions and follow directions closely.

NEVER apply herbicides to standing water unless they are distinctly labeled for aquatic use. Ingredients in these products may be toxic to fish.

- **Always read and understand the label of the herbicides you choose to use.**
- **More is NOT better when using herbicides, and may actually hinder the ability of the herbicide to injure the target plant if the solution is too strong. This wastes money and effort and puts more product into the environment than is necessary. ALWAYS follow the recommended rates on the label.**
- **With all herbicides, when you apply them is as important as how you apply them.**

The mention of a specific product brand name in this document is not, and should not be construed as an endorsement or as a recommendation for the use of that product. Herbicide information is taken from the WSU Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook and King County Noxious Weed Program.