

Blackberry

Rubus fruticosus

Description:

There are two different non-native species of blackberries in Asotin County; Himalayan and Evergreen. Himalayan is more abundant. These invasive blackberry species out compete native understory vegetation and prevent the establishment of native trees that require sun for germination such as alder and cottonwood. Dense, impenetrable blackberry thickets can block access of larger wildlife to water and other resources.

It is a rambling evergreen, perennial, woody shrub with stout stems that possess stiff, hooked prickles. It may grow up to 13.1 feet. Plants grow into impenetrable thickets. Flower clusters (panicles) are flat-topped and have 5 to 20 flowers. Each flower has 5 petals that are white to rose colored and about 1 inch in diameter. Himalayan blackberry leaves are palmately compound with large, rounded to oblong, toothed leaflets usually in groups of 5 on main stems. Evergreen blackberry, also known as cut-leaf blackberry, has deeply incised leaflets. Stems, commonly called canes, can reach up to 20 to 40 feet and can root at their tips when they touch the ground. Canes have hooked, sharp prickles with wide bases. Flowers form blackberries—a grouping of small, shiny, black drupelets (fleshy fruit with a stony pit) that each contain one seed. Blackberries are about 1/2 inch to 7/8 inch in size. Plants begin flowering in spring with fruit ripening in midsummer to early August. Daughter plants form where canes touch ground. Seeds remain viable in the soil for several years.

Habitat: It does well in a wide range of soil pH and textures. It can grow well in a variety of disturbed sites such as roadsides, railroad tracks, logged lands, field margins and riparian areas.

Mechanical: Using equipment to tear out vines followed by herbicide treatment has been successful.

Biological: none

Cultural control: Goats have been used successfully when carefully managed by handlers. After 2-3 years, new shoots need to be treated with herbicides.

Chemical: glyphosate

Rate Broadcast: use 2.25 to 3 lb ae/A. Spot treat: use 1% to 1.5% solutions.

Time Apply in September to October when canes are actively growing and after berries are formed. Fall treatments must be made before a killing frost.

Remarks Fall spray treatment symptoms may not show before frost. Re-treatment may be necessary for complete control. Trailing blackberry is more difficult to control.

Caution Glyphosate controls grasses in the treated area as well as other vegetation.

Site of action Group 9: inhibits EPSP synthase

Chemical family None generally accepted

Metsulfuron (Escort and others)

Rate Escort: 0.3 to 0.6 oz ai/A (0.5 to 1 oz/A)

Time Apply to fully leafed-out vegetation before fall leaf coloration.

Remarks Constantly agitate while mixing product in water. Add 0.25% by volume of nonionic or silicone surfactant to spray mixture. Good coverage is essential. Application sites differ between products; consult labels.

Caution Avoid contact with sensitive crops. Apply only to pasture, rangeland, and non-crop sites.

Site of action Group 2: acetolactate synthase (ALS) inhibitor

Chemical family Sulfonylurea

Picloram (Tordon)

Rate 1 lb ae with 50 gal of water for spot treatment sprays

Time Apply in late spring after leaves are fully developed.

Remarks Foliage must be thoroughly wet. Reapplication will be required as regrowth occurs.

Caution: Most formulations are restricted-use herbicides. Do not contaminate water.

Potatoes, beans, and many other broadleaf crops are sensitive to picloram. Do not use picloram in diversified cropping areas.

Site of action Group 4: synthetic auxin

Chemical family Pyridine

triclopyr ester (Garlon 4) or triclopyr amine (Garlon 3A) or triclopyr + 2,4-D (Crossbow)

Rate Spot treatment: mix 3 lb ae Garlon 4 or 3.75 lb ae Garlon 3A with 100 gal water, or 1 pint Crossbow in 12 gal water. Broadcast: use 1 to 4 lb ae/A Garlon 4, or 1.5 to 4.5 lb ae/A Garlon 3A, or 1 to 2 gal/A Crossbow.

Time Apply when plants are actively growing. For dormant application, mix Garlon 4 in diesel oil or in water with 3% of an oil substitute.

Remarks Foliage must be thoroughly wet.

Caution Use on rights-of-way, industrial sites, and for forestry (release and site preparation).

Crossbow can be used on permanent pasture and rangeland, up to 1.5 lb ae/A. Observe all grazing and harvesting restrictions.

Site of action (all) Group 4: synthetic auxin

Chemical family (triclopyr) pyridine; (2,4-D) phenoxy acetic acid

Distribution: Riparian areas

ACNWCB Policy: The Board recommends that landowners keep blackberries controlled rather than try to eradicate them.

