

BLACKBERRY



GREENLINE
PREMIUM PROPERTY CARE

Blackberry is a perennial bush, growing in thickets of long woody canes, covered with thorns, stretching up to several metres long.

They are common, grow quickly, and are often unwanted on properties. Small white flowers bloom in late spring to summer, followed by edible berries from January to March. Blackberries like full sun and can tolerate poor ground conditions.



SPREAD

Blackberry seeds are spread usually by being eaten or carried by birds and small mammals.

They can also be spread through water, and through physical transfer between properties (i.e. in hay or on equipment).



GROWTH

Young sprouting blackberry has the same familiar shaped dark green leaves and woody thorny stems as larger plants, so they are relatively easy to spot and manage when young.

Throughout winter they are dormant, but from the end of spring once the temperatures increase, they grow vigorously.

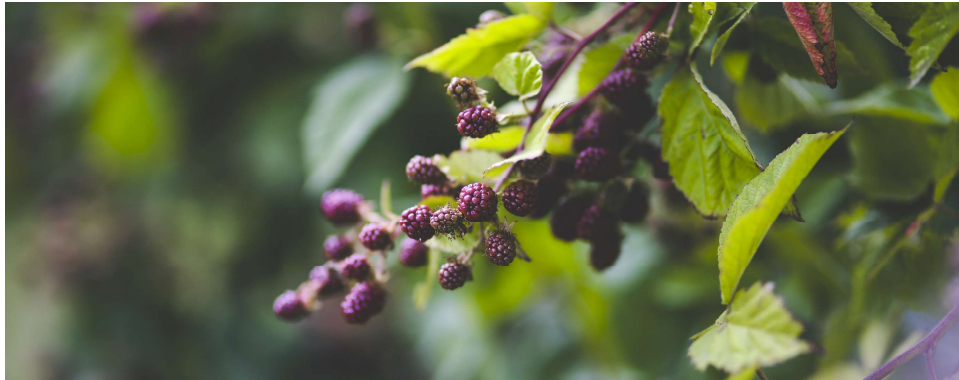


IMPACTS

Blackberry plants are not harmful to animals, but can be undesirable due to:

1. Providing cover for rabbit burrows and habitats
2. Covering and shading areas where grass could be grown
3. Preventing access and being annoying with their thistles
4. Invading garden beds and being difficult to remove





TREATMENT

HERBICIDE

The common herbicides used for blackberry (and other woody weeds) use the active ingredients Triclopyr, Metsulfuron Methyl, Picloram, or Aminopyralid (or a combination of these). Some of these are selective and will not kill grasses around the blackberry, and you should always seek advice and/or follow the directions for the chemical chosen.

When using herbicide as a spray onto leaves, all the leaves must be sprayed to the point of run-off. A backpack sprayer is usually not effective, a tractor mounted spray unit is recommended.

Herbicide spraying is most effective during the active growing season over summer, prior to fruit forming. This is generally from December to March.

Avoid spraying after the berries have formed, as herbicides could harm birds that feed on them, and if they are accessible to passers by, then put up a sign to stop anyone eating the berries.

Stock can continue to graze in areas where blackberry has been treated with herbicide, as no withholding periods apply.

SLASHING

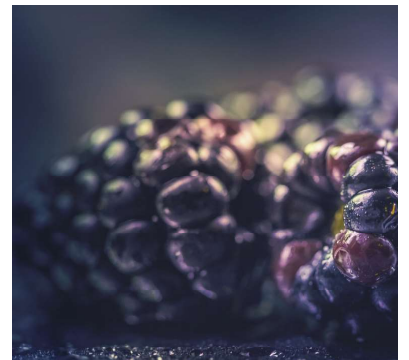
Slashing is useful to cut down dead blackberry following the use of herbicide, or to cut them back to a manageable size.

For these two approaches to be effective, you should slash blackberry a few months prior to applying herbicide (to allow it to regrow before spraying), or a few months after spraying (to allow the chemical to fully penetrate and kill the plant).

This means slashing would take place either around July/August (3-4 months before spraying), or April/May (3-4 months after spraying).

PERSIST

Eradicating blackberry will likely require management over several years. The first year is focussed on knocking down and removing large bushes, and the second year is about killing off any small regrowth. Years three onwards will be focussed on spot treating small plants and any newly introduced plants.



OR EAT

Of course blackberries are only a weed when we don't want them around - and the berries are delicious!!

Don't eat any from bushes you've sprayed, but if you've chosen to let them grow, then enjoy the fruits from late summer!

Left to grow, blackberry bushes can produce fruit for up to 20 years.

