



Control Options for Himalayan Blackberry



General Information

Himalayan blackberry is a robust, sprawling, weak-stemmed shrub. The stems, called canes, can grow 20-40 feet long. The canes can take root at the tip, when they hit the ground, further expanding the infestation. Canes start producing berries in their second year. Individual canes may live only 2 to 3 years, with new stalks sprouting from the root crown. Himalayan blackberry has white to light pink flowers, which produce a large, juicy, blackberry. Himalayan blackberry can be evergreen, depending on the site.

Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Seedlings or first year plants can be hand pulled, especially in loose, moist soil. Larger plants can also be hand dug. Care should be taken to remove as much of the root as possible, to prevent resprouting. Mowing can be used to control blackberries, but must be repeated throughout the growing season. Cutting and removing canes is a very short-term solution, as more canes will sprout from the root crown. However, these new sprouts could subsequently be treated with herbicide. If canes can only be removed once in a season, the best time is when the plant starts to flower, since much of the root reserves have gone into flowering.

Chemical Recommendations

Himalayan blackberry can be managed using specific herbicides. If herbicides are used during berry production, care should be taken to prevent people from using berries. 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. Do not cut sprayed plants for at least 2 weeks after herbicide application. 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.

A *Glyphosate* solution at a rate of 1-1.5 % (of a 41% active ingredient product) should be used and applied during fall months to just wet the foliage (*Glyphosate* is marketed as RoundUp® and many other brands). This gets very good control. *Metsulfuron* (e.g. Escort®) can be used effectively in early fall before fall leaf color begins, but may or may not be an appropriate herbicide for your site. Good coverage is critical. This herbicide can affect shrub species also. *Triclopyr* is effective and rates vary for foliar treatment from 4 to 8 quarts per acre, depending on application equipment. Spray to wet on actively growing plants and/or in early fall. *Triclopyr* can be used in solution mix with *2,4-D*, or as already prepared in combination (e.g. Crossbow®).

NEVER apply Round-up or other 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.