



Yachats Weed of the Month - May 2012

Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus discolor*)

Himalayan blackberry goes by various of scientific names, including *R. discolor*, *R. armeniacus* and *R. bifrons*, but they all boil down to one thing – a highly invasive plant that has colonized much of our region. Although it is not flowering or producing fruit at this time of the year, it will need no introduction to anyone who has spent more than a few hours driving around the Oregon coast.

Identification: Left unchecked, blackberry forms dense, impenetrable thickets. The long, reddish canes, sharp spines, white to pink flowers that appear in the summer and the edible black berries all serve to make it easily recognizable.

Habitat: Blackberry enjoys the high rainfall of the Oregon coast. It quickly colonizes disturbed areas such as roadsides and cleared lots. One square yard of blackberry thicket can produce 10,000 seeds each season. Birds and animals can disperse these seeds over long distances.

Impact: Himalayan blackberry displaces native plants, obstructs water flow in streams and irrigation ditches, and inhibits recreational activities.

Management: Blackberry thickets can be controlled by cutting back the stems and then digging the plants out by the roots. The initial removal should be followed up regularly for several years to remove new plantlets and sprouts from residual roots. Although herbicide treatment can be effective, the city of Yachats discourages this approach.

Contact information: Call Wally at 541 547 5474 if you have any questions. For our web page, go to www.yachats.info and follow the link.

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