

Washington Invasive Ranking System

Washington Natural Heritage Program

Rubus laciniatus (Cut-Leaf Blackberry)

Assessed by

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Ecological Impact Rank: **Moderate (59)**

Confidence: **Low (33)**

Management Difficulty Rank: Low (47)

Confidence: Moderate (60)

Biological Characteristics of Invasiveness: Moderate (70)

Confidence: Moderate (58)

Concern Related to Distribution and Abundance: Moderate (60)

Confidence: Moderate (40)



Photo Credit: Barry Breckling 2019, used under Creative Commons license (CalPhotos, 2024).

Ranking Notes

Rapid assessment only, based primarily on professional expertise.

Legal Listings

[Washington State Weed Board](#): Class C

[Washington Invasive Species Council](#): No

Section 1: Distribution and Abundance

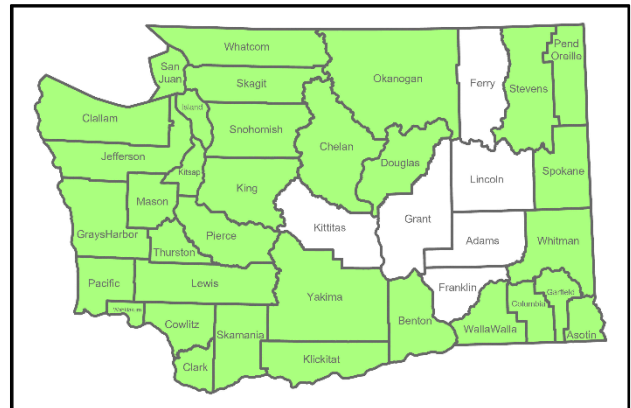


Figure 1. Distribution of counties where *Rubus laciniatus* has been documented in Washington State (CPNWH, 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

Q1: Current Range Size in Washington

Rating: High

Confidence: High

Rubus laciniatus is documented from 85% of counties in Washington State (CPNWH 2024; EDDMapS, 2024; iNaturalist Community, 2024).

Source: Herbarium records and other observations

Q2: Current Trend in Total Range

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

This species doesn't seem to be spreading much in southwest Washington. However, it may be of more concern in other parts of the state.

Source: Professional expertise

Q3: Proportion of Potential Range Currently Unoccupied

Rating: Low

Confidence: Low

This species is fairly widespread already, may not have much remaining suitable habitat.

Source: Professional expertise

Q4: Local Range Expansion or Change in Abundance

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

Does not appear to be spreading as aggressively as *Rubus bifrons*.

Source: Professional expertise

Q5: Diversity of Ecosystems Invaded

Ecosystem types: Forest & Woodland, Grassland & Shrubland, Emergent Open Wetland, Forested Wetland

Rating: High

Confidence: Low

Source: Professional expertise

Section 2: Biological Characteristics

Q6: Aggressive Mode of Reproduction

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

This species produces large amounts of seed and can reproduce vegetatively.

Source: Professional expertise

Q7: Innate Potential for Long-Distance Dispersal

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

Fruits are eaten by birds and mammals.

Source: Professional expertise

Q8: Potential to be Spread by Human Activities

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

This plant is cultivated for its fruits in some areas.

Source: Professional expertise

Q9: Allelopathy

Rating: No

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

Q10: Competitive for Limiting Abiotic Factors

Rating: No

Confidence: Low

Source: Professional expertise

Q11: Growth Form

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

This species forms thickets and can shade other plants.

Source: Professional expertise

Q12: Germination Requirements

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

Source: Professional expertise

Q13: Invasiveness of Other Plants in Genus

Rating: Yes

Confidence: High

There are several other invasive *Rubus* species.

Source: Professional expertise

Q14: Shade Tolerance

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

May be found in partial shade.

Source: Professional expertise

Q15: Disturbance Tolerance

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

Disturbance appears to give this species a competitive advantage.

Source: Professional expertise

Q16: Propagule Persistence

Rating: <5 years

Confidence: Low

Propagule persistence is estimated here based on the time needed to treat seedlings after control.

Source: Professional expertise

Q17: Palatability

Rating: Yes, plant is unpalatable

Confidence: Moderate

The fruit is palatable, but most animals don't eat the leaves and canes.

Source: Professional expertise

Section 3: Ecological Impact

Q18: Impact on Ecosystem Abiotic Processes

Abiotic Processes: Light availability

Rating: Low

Confidence: Not Rated

This species competes with natives for light and potentially nutrients, but thickets usually don't grow particularly large.

Source: Professional expertise

Q19: Impact on Ecosystem Structure

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

May cause loss of native plants beneath the thicket, but overall structural impact is generally restricted.

Source: Professional expertise

Q20: Impact on Ecosystem Composition

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

Likely minor impacts to native plant composition.

Source: Professional expertise

Q21: Impact on Particular Native Species

Rating: Unknown

Confidence: Not Rated

This species may impact *Trillium parviflorum*, but impacts are not likely to be disproportionate.

Source: Professional expertise

Q22: Observed Ability to Invade Undisturbed Ecosystems

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

Q23: Observed Ability to Invade Naturally Disturbed Ecosystems

Rating: Yes

Confidence: Moderate

Seems more common in disturbed areas.

Source: Professional expertise

Section 4: Management Difficulty

Q24: General Management Difficulty

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

Q25: Minimum Time Commitment

Rating: Low

Confidence: Moderate

This species requires 2-3 years of treatment of mature plants and seedlings.

Source: Professional expertise

Q26: Impacts of Management on Native Species

Rating: Low

Confidence: High

Treatment is usually conducted in the fall when most natives have senesced for the year.

Source: Professional expertise

Q27: Inaccessibility of Invaded Areas

Rating: Moderate

Confidence: Moderate

Source: Professional expertise

Q28: Sociopolitical Implications of Management

Rating: Moderate/Low

Confidence: Moderate

Some people may oppose herbicide control because berries are edible.

Source: Professional expertise

Additional Comments

None

References

- CalPhotos. 2024. Berkeley Natural History Museums, University of California, Berkeley. <https://calphotos.berkeley.edu/>. Accessed: December 17, 2024.
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- iNaturalist Community. 2024. Research grade observations from Washington State. <https://www.inaturalist.org/>. Accessed: December 24, 2024.

