

## ***Rubus discolor*, Armenian (Himalayan) Blackberry**

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### **General Botanical Characteristics**

*Rubus discolor*, formally known as the Himalayan Blackberry, is a robust clambering or sprawling evergreen shrub. In recent years it was realized that this species doesn't grow in the Himalayas, but in fact is native to Armenia. This invasive plant grows up to 9 feet in height and aggressively competes with surrounding plants by draping over them and crowding them out. Its thorny stems and 3 to 5 compound leaflets can distinguish the Armenian blackberry from native blackberries. It propagates by seed banking and cutlets.



### **Seasonal Development**

The Armenian blackberry generally flowers from June to August. Fruit ripens in August and September, with seed dispersal in the Fall.

### **Distribution/Habitat**

Armenian blackberry is a good food source for wild birds and is widely distributed. It can be found on disturbed sites in the Northeast and Pacific Northwest. It is also cultivated in gardens for its berry crop.

### **Interesting Facts**

- Armenian blackberry is the most commonly harvested wild blackberry in western Washington and Oregon, although its fruit is reportedly less flavorful than that of the native trailing blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).
- It is a preferred berry for fruit pies.
- The fruit, roots, and stems of blackberries have been used to make various medicinal preparations.

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### **References**

US Forest Service Fire Effects Plant Database, November 2002,  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/rubdis/>

Photo from George W. Hartwell, November 2002,  
<http://elib.cs.berkeley.edu/photos/>