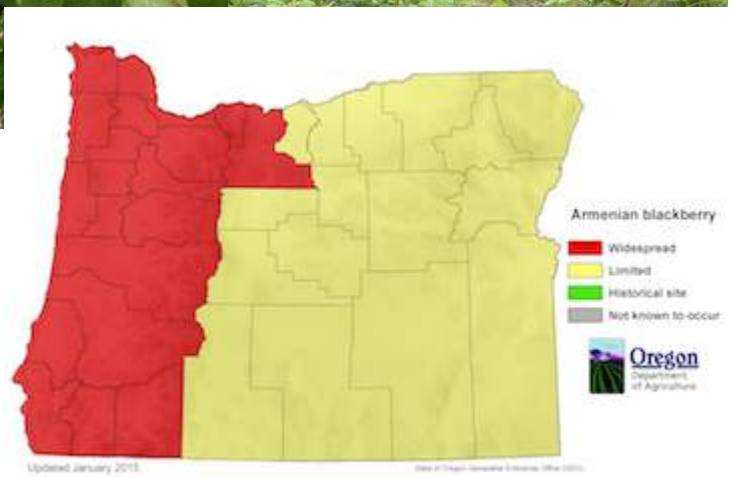
"B" Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant, but may have limited distribution in some counties

Armenian blackberry
Rubus armeniacus

Other common names: Himalayan blackberry

USDA symbol: RUDI2
ODA rating: B



Distribution in Oregon: Armenian blackberry is widely distributed throughout Western Oregon. Populations in Eastern Oregon are on the increase in Hells Canyon and along most other river systems.

Introduction: Armenian blackberry was first noted in Oregon in 1922 in Marion County. Originally named Himalayan blackberry after its place of origin, it was introduced by Luther Burbank for berry breeding in the Willamette Valley.

Description: It grows as a robust, well-armored, perennial vine producing large impenetrable thickets especially along valley floors. Deep-growing woody roots yearly produce spine covered, reddish stems often extending more than 20 feet per season. Leaves are alternate, palmate and compound with serrate margins. Flowers are five petaled, white to light pink blooming in early summer. Fruit production is heavy and well favored by robins and other songbirds. There are other non-native blackberry species in Oregon. Armenian is the most robust.

Impacts: It is the most widespread and economically disruptive of all the noxious weeds in western Oregon. It aggressively displaces native plant species, dominates most riparian habitats, and poses a significant economic impact on right-of-way maintenance, agriculture, park, and forest production. It is a significant impediment in riparian restoration projects and physically inhibits access to wild lands. Reproduction occurs through rooting at cane apices (tips), by root fragments or by seeds, which are dispersed by birds and animals. These reproductive strategies allow it to expand rapidly across a landscape. Any control strategy can be considered short-lived if it does not take into consideration soil seed stocks and potential future land disturbance.

Biological controls: At this time no approved biological agent is available for release in Oregon. In March of 2005, rust was found severely impacting Armenian blackberry along a 100-mile stretch of the Oregon Coast. The rust has been confirmed as *Phragmidium violaceum* (Schultz), which has been used as a biocontrol agent for blackberry in parts of

Oregon Department of Agriculture • Noxious Weed Control Program
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www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Weeds/Pages/Default.aspx

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