

Field guide for the identification of WA blackberry

Rubus anglocandicans (common blackberry)

Previously referred to as *R. chloocladus*, *R. discolor*, *R. ulmifolius* hybrids, *R. fruticosus* or *R. procerus*.



- Originally from Europe and susceptible to the rust *Phragmidium violaceum*.
- Canes long and arching, canes at non-flowering stage (primocanes) often tip-root.
- Flowers white but may have a pink tinge in bud (or after treatment with herbicides).
- Flowers produced December-January in WA.
- Leaves have 3-5 leaflets, terminal leaflets 4-11 cm long.
- Non-terminal leaflets (mostly) arise from a common spot (ie. palmate).
- Underside of (most) leaves “white” compared to “green” upper side.
- Numerous fruit (can be 100 per tip). Inflorescence narrowly pyramidal to broadly cylindrical.

Rubus ulmifolius (small leaf blackberry)



- Originally from Europe. Partially susceptible to *Phragmidium violaceum*.
- Canes arching. Occurs along river edge but also forms mounds in pasture.
- There is a thornless variety.
- Flowers pink at all stages. Produced December-January in WA.
- Leaves have 3-5 leaflets, terminal leaflets 4-8 cm long.
- Non-terminal leaflets (mostly) arise from a common spot (ie. palmate).
- Underside of (most) leaves “white” compared to “green” upper side.
- Inflorescence compact cylindrical.

Rubus laudatus (early blackberry in WA)

Previously referred to as *R. bellobatus*, *R. fruticosus* and *R. aff. selmeri*.



- Originally from North America. Completely resistant to *Phragmidium violaceum*.
- Canes long and arching. Occurs mainly along river edge.
- Flowers pure-white (no pink tinges). Produced September-November in WA.
- Leaves have 3-5 leaflets, palmate. Terminal leaflets 4-12 cm long.
- Underside of (most) leaves “green” and similar to upper side.
- Inflorescence a series of short, 5-20cm stems from leaf axils of cane. Each has 3-12 flowers.
- With hand lens- can see red glandular hairs (look like red dots) on cane’s surface.

Western Australia has only a few weedy and no native *Rubus* species. This is known because in 2004/5 a large scale herbarium collection of blackberry was undertaken by Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Department of Agriculture and Food WA (DAFWA) and Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) officers to determine the overall distribution and incidence of weedy blackberry taxa in Western Australia, and to identify new incursions. The results from this survey are summarized in Figure 1 [which was created from results in Batchelor K.L., McFarlane, T.D., Moore, J.H. and J.K. Scott (in Prep). Distribution of weedy blackberry species in Western Australia – taxonomy and implications for management].

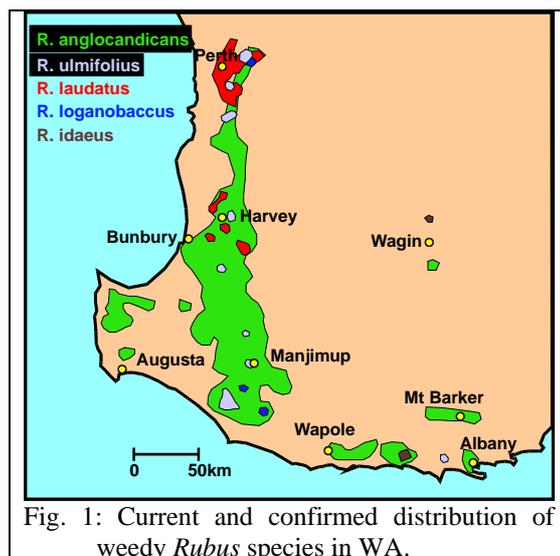


Fig. 1: Current and confirmed distribution of weedy *Rubus* species in WA.

In WA, only *Rubus anglocandicans*, and to a lesser extent *R. ulmifolius*, are susceptible to the blackberry rust. All 3 are originally from Europe. The following species all not susceptible to the blackberry rust and will require herbicides or physical methods to control: *Rubus laudatus* (an American blackberry), *R. loganobaccus* (loganberry) and *R. idaeus* (raspberry).

Table 1: summary of features that can be used to separate the weedy *Rubus* of WA [using criteria listed in Barker, R.M. and W.R. Barker (2005). Blackberry: an identification tool to introduced and native *Rubus* in Australia. Edn 1.00 CD-ROM, Adelaide, State Herbarium of South Australia.].

Weedy <i>Rubus</i> Species (BB=blackberry)	Sucept. to rust?	Flower colour	Angled & grooved stem *	Stout recurved thorns	Red glands on canes	Leaf** shape & colour
<i>R. anglocandicans</i> (common BB)	yes	white if open	yes	yes	no	palmate G/W
<i>R. ulmifolius</i> (small leaf BB)	partly	pink	yes	yes	no	palmate G/W
<i>R. ulmifolius</i> var <i>anoplothysus</i> (thornless)	partly	pink	yes	no	no	palmate G/W
<i>R. laudatus</i> (early BB)	no	white	yes	yes	yes	palmate G/G
<i>R. loganobaccus</i> (loganberry)	no	white	slight	no	no	pinnate G/G
<i>R. roribaccus</i> (dewberry)	no	white	if dried	no	no	palmate G/G
<i>R. idaeus</i> (raspberry)	no	white +fruit hollow	no	no	no	palmate G/Y

* cross sections of some stems look angled and grooved (like a starfish or star shape). Raspberry stems are round in cross section.

**leaf colour for upper/lower surface (G=green, W=white (or grey), Y=yellow).

Palmate = when more than 3 leaflets in a leaf, all (except the top one) arise from a common spot (like the fingers from your palm).
Pinnate = when more than 3 leaflets in a leaf, all leaflets (except the top one) are joined in pairs.