Weed Identification and Control Sheet:

GOOD OAK LLC ecological services

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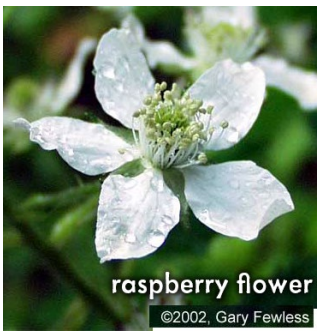
Wild Raspberries (*Rubus* spp.)

-2 Persistant Weed

DESCRIPTION:

Wild raspberries are small shrubs in the rose family with sharp and sturdy thorns which discourage most herbivores and can make it difficult to traverse through woodlands. These same thorny brambles can be habitat for small animals to hide from predators. Raspberries produce large, sweet berries which are edible to humans and an important food source for song birds and other wildlife. However, raspberries can act aggressively in disturbed environments, such woodlands that have been grazed or where tree and brush has been cleared. Black raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*), red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) and common blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*) are the most common and most aggressive species among the dozens of native raspberries in our region. It is sometimes necessary to "knock back" these native shrubs in order to return balance to the plant community.



IDENTIFICATION:

Raspberries typically have leaves with three to five leaflets, white, five-pedaled flowers that develop into red or black berries.

The leaves of **black raspberries** are typically divided into three leaflets while the underside of the leaves are very pale, near white. Mature stems of this species have an arching structure, grow up to 4' in height and are thorny and wine red in color. Immature stems are pale green. These stems are covered in a layer of "glaucous" wax which gives them a pale appearance, but rubs off easily. The thorns are far enough apart that you can grab the stem in your fingers with out getting pricked. Ripe berries are black.

Red raspberry is similar to black raspberry but instead of widely spaced, stout thorn,s the thorns are fine, almost hair-like and abundant, making it impossible the grab the stem without multiple thorns in your fingers. Ripe berries are red.

Common blackberry has leaves which are typically divided into five leaflets. The stems, which can reach over 5' in height, exhibit grooves or ridges running down their length with large, stout, widely spaced thorns. Ripe berries are black.

CONTROL METHODS:

Organic: A prescribed burn and/or mowing can be effective at reducing raspberry density and vigor if repeated multiple times over 1-2 years. Spring and fall burns are both effective, but mowing should focus on June around when the raspberries bloom repeat mowing treatments as the raspberries resprout and leaf-out.

Chemical: After mowing or burning a foliar application of glyphosate ((Round-Up®, etc.) can be used as the raspberries resprout and leaf-out. Broadleaf-specific herbicides such as triclopyr (Garlon® 4, Brush-B-Gon®) can be used if you are concerned about killing nearby grasses. Another method involves cutting the raspberry stems to the ground and applying a concentrated solution of either glyphosate or triclopyr to the stump. Always read herbicide labels carefully before use and always apply according to the instruction on the product label.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVES:

If you are working to clear blackberries in a woodland or savanna then the goal of the restoration project should be to restore a diverse assemblage of grasses, sedges, flowers and shrubs to the area. The seedbank or nearby seed sources may provide the vegetation you are looking for, or you may need to spread seeds or plant plugs of these species in the are in order to get them established. Contact us if you need help establishing native vegetation.

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