

Rubus argutus

Highbush blackberry, prickly Florida blackberry

Rubus argutus Link
Syn. *R. penetrans*

Family: Rosaceae

Description: Prickly bramble with long arching stems to 10 ft long, angled, slightly hairy, lateral branches that bear the flowers are more hairy. Leaves broad, pinnate, 3–5 leaflets, up to 5 inches long by 2 inches wide, upper surface smooth, lower hairy, midrib prickly as are leaf stems, margins serrate. Flowers in clusters, white. Fruits red maturing to black, 0.8 inches long. [Other *Rubus* species have become naturalized and may be problems: *R. glaucus* Benth. in Puna, Hawai‘i; *R. sieboldii* Blume in Lawa‘i Valley and Kilauea on Kaua‘i; and *R. discolor* Weihe & Nees in West Maui and Pālolo Valley on O‘ahu.] *Rubus* means bramble in Latin; *argutus*, sharp toothed^(5, 12, 70).

Distribution: Native to the eastern and central USA, it is a serious pest in moist to wet forests and pastures of Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Maui, and Hawai‘i. First collected on Hawai‘i in 1904⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Environmental impact: Smothers low plants and shrubs. Blocks passage on trails. Seeds spread by birds, including the ‘alalā.



Management: Sensitive to foliar applications of triclopyr and picloram; dicamba not effective⁽⁵⁰⁾. Sensitive to metsulfuron. Susceptible to drizzle applications of triclopyr and of glyphosate in trail work on the Nāpali Coast of Kaua‘i. Chris Zimmer and Tim Tunison at HAVO reported triclopyr amine at 0.5 % of product without surfactant, sprayed to wet the foliage, was effective. Pat Bily (TNC) confirmed triclopyr amine at 0.5% of product without surfactant effective. Bily also reported 10% triclopyr ester product in vegetable-oil based carrier applied to 2–3 inches at base of each cane very effective.