



**Blackberry infestation is out of control. With the wet spring and cooler growing conditions blackberries are growing out of control across the Hughes Creek Catchment. This is not only a problem for individual landholders but for all our communities.**

These photographs show the extent of the problem in just one small area. This problem is not just confined to the creeks and is problematic across numerous places in the catchment.

These plants are now in fruit and the problem will be spread by birds; action should be taken NOW to avoid a bigger and more expensive problem in the years to come.



## How you can help

If the problem is on your property, please start a program to eradicate the plants, you can do this by physical means, suitable for small areas, or start a spraying program. Spraying can be done until the first frost, normally in early May.

If you see an infestation on neighbouring properties, this would be a good opportunity to get all the affected landholders working together on an eradication programme. Why not start a conversation, organise a neighbourly meeting, assist each other to get on top of this problem before it becomes overwhelming and spreads to areas currently unaffected?

Some landholders may think that this is 'someone else's problem, it is not, **it is everyone's responsibility**, and needs to be dealt with promptly.

Please let HCCC know of any lack of interest or action and also contact your local shire environment officer, or the bio security officer at the DEWLP offices in Seymour especially if the problem is on government land.

If this year's spread looks impressive, next year's will be much bigger and more expensive to control.

## How HCCC can help

- HCCC will subsidise the costs of chemicals by 50%, **please contact the HCCC before purchasing chemicals to get approval for the subsidy**
- HCCC have spraying equipment at a very small cost to assist
- We can put you in touch a company that that spray from a helicopter, only suitable for large problems over 15 Ha.
- HCCC also have information on a new company that sprays from a drone, the drone can target small areas in difficult to reach areas with a vehicle or tractor.
- Can provide a list of commercial spraying companies.

## Impact of Blackberries

### Impact on ecosystems and waterways

Blackberry is considered a serious environmental threat and is highly invasive. It can provide harbour and a food source for pest species, as well as serve to outcompete and eliminate other vegetation by excluding light from the soil surface.

In its early stages of infestation, blackberry will grow over, or occupy gaps in, native vegetation and, in later stages, can severely restrict regeneration in native forests.

### Agricultural and economic impacts

- Blackberry is an extremely serious agricultural threat, owing to its rapid growth and ability to reproduce through various methods. It is a highly invasive species that will readily establish on disturbed sites and infest large areas. Once established it is expensive to manage and can even be a fire hazard due to large amounts of dead canes.
- The plant's strong prickles make it hazardous and unpalatable to grazing animals (except browsing animals, such as goats and deer) and impenetrable thickets provide harbour and food for pest animals such as rabbits and foxes, starlings, and blackbirds. It may also restrict access to watercourses in forestry operations and for grazing animals.
- Blackberry may affect the establishment and growth of both softwood and hardwood seedlings in plantation forestry.

### Social value and health impacts

Blackberry can restrict access to and along watercourses which may affect recreational activities. It also produces strong prickles which make it objectionable to humans and in large infestations, may be a fire hazard due to large amounts of dead canes.

## Management

### Prescribed measures for the control of noxious weeds:

- application of a registered herbicide
- physical removal
- mulching.

## Contact information

Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative – Landcare Network

email [neil@hccclandcare.net.au](mailto:neil@hccclandcare.net.au)

<https://www.hccclandcare.net.au/>

Victorian Government

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/search?query=weeds>

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/prescribed-measures-for-the-control-of-noxious-weeds>

## Drone Spraying Contacts



**Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)**

- Agricultural Spraying
- Animal Management
- Asset Control/Surveillance Ops
- Fire Management/Emergency Response

**Michel Durand (Jimmy)**  
**+61 400 873 128**  
**[michel@fieldmastersystems.com](mailto:michel@fieldmastersystems.com)**  
**[fieldmastersystems.com](http://fieldmastersystems.com)**



Local contact for Drone spraying is Alastair Tame from Strathbogie ATaerial Services Phone 0400 345 088

## Helicopter Spraying Contacts

<https://www.patonairhelicopters.com.au>

[ag.patonair@gmail.com](mailto:ag.patonair@gmail.com)

Phone – 0484 108 854



## Helicopter Spraying



As we all know, Blackberries are an invasive species and negatively impact Australian native ecosystems. They can have a large impact on primary industries making grazing and cropping difficult with large infestations and can also become a hazard during natural disasters.

### Why Aerial spray with us?

With new and forever changing technologies, aerial spraying has and is constantly changing farmers lives and workload easier, and for the better. The manoeuvrability of the helicopter allows the pilot to spray those troublesome paddocks with large trees and powerlines, reaching inaccessible, steep, and hilly locations fixed wing aircraft and ground rigs cannot, effectively turning unproductive land into productive land. The downwash of the blades and the use of the Accu-flow nozzles are designed to push the chemical down and out to saturate through the bush to provide accurate, exceptional, and noticeable target results, with maximum drift control ensuring no contamination of non-target crops. If necessary, we can use our spot sprayer on a long line, to get to those tricky smaller hidden bushes. The aerial application method is found to be favoured as it also minimises disturbance of native vegetation and wildlife, requires no specialist skills or training for volunteers, limits chemical exposure to workers and farmers, removes the need to carry large amounts of water, and is extremely time effective because treated areas require little follow-up treatment.

Paton Airs new online mapping system 'Tracmap' also allows you to make an client account straight to our companies Helicopters GPS tablet. This new system allows you to do your own mapping with google earth satellite imagery from the comfort of your home, leaving notes, map markers, exclusion zones, buffers, chemical rates all for the pilot to see before we get to your job. Our loader truck is fully equipment with all mixing necessities including a large 3000L water tank, pump hoses, a stainless-steel chemical agitation vat, JET-A1 fuel, flow meters, pumps and more, even better our truck is 4x4 meaning it can get to those tricky loading spots on higher ground. Our staff are fully trained and ACUP holders.

Contact us at <https://www.patonairhelicopters.com.au> [ag.patonair@gmail.com](mailto:ag.patonair@gmail.com) or give us a call for your next spraying needs

Phone – 0484 108 854

48 Magills Lane Maindample Victoria 3723