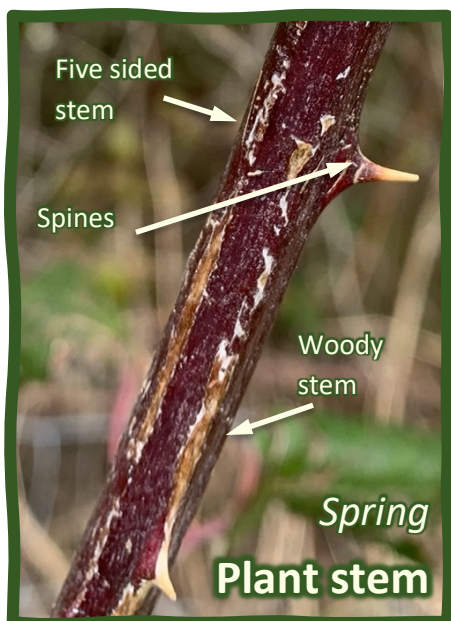
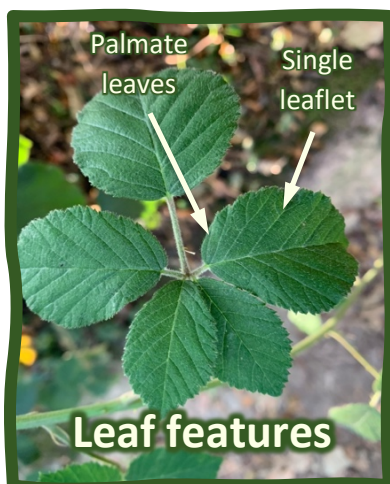


PLANT ID: blackberry

Rubus fruticosus L. (agg.)



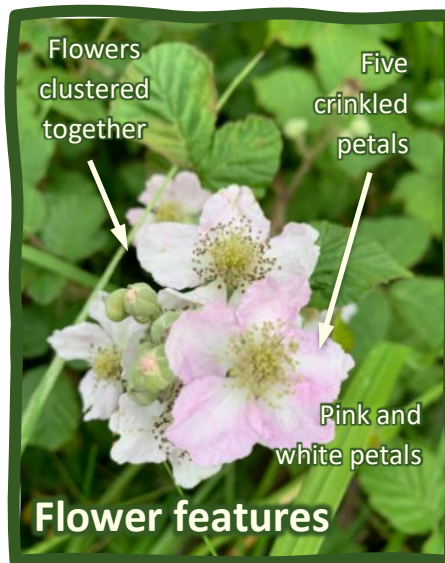
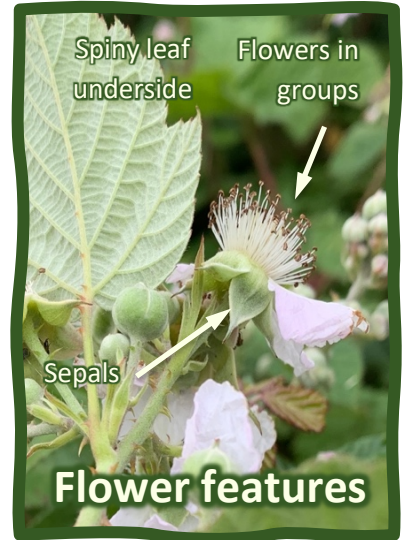
Brambles, like dandelions, are not a single species, but a grouping (aggregation) of many similar micro-species that differ in a variety of ways such as leaf shape, fruit shape, colour and taste.



PLANT ID: blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* L. (agg.)



Avoid picking berries beside roads for presence of heavy metals from car exhausts. !



Reproduction strategies:

- Pollinated by insects
- Stem tips tend to root when touching the ground, creating new plants



PLANT ID: blackberry

Rubus fruticosus L. (agg.)

Fact File:

CURRENT STATUS: Least Concern of becoming extinct
LOCATION: Found everywhere across U.K and Europe

Plant Description (aka Taxonomy)

Member of the *Rubus* genus, a part of the rose family (*Rosaceae*).

A very thorny low growing shrub that is capable of forming impenetrable thickets of tangled arching stems, which can extend up to 4 metres.

It is highly invasive; if not managed regularly, the diversity of other species around it.

Rubus is true competitor species.



Flowers from May to September

Flower Structure

5 crinkled, petalled flowers, white or pink in colour with leafy sepals beneath; being either solitary or in panicles on previous year's growth. Numerous stamens seated on a raised conical receptacle; sepals joined together in a cup below the petals reflexed when in fruit.



Fruits

August to November. Numerous separate globular drupes (segments) each with a hard seed case within. Red in colour at first then ripening a **shiny black**. The gritty texture in a blackberry crumble pudding are the hard seed cases.



Leaf

Variable with either ternate, pinnate or palmately arranged toothed leaflets in set of 3, 5 or 7. Can be either deciduous or semi-evergreen. The stipules are fused to leaf stalk.



Habitat

Found in woods, scrubby waste land, hedges, coast and lowland/upland heathland.



Magic Status

Scientists have found the leaves to be full of flavonoids, some of which can heal sore-throats, mouth sores and reduce aging.

ALIASES

Also known as:
Bramble, English Blackberry, Scaldhead and Bumble-kites.

What to look for



Best time to see it and use it

- Late August to the end of September are the best times for picking the delicious fruits.
- By the end of October some berries will have picked up mildews, bacteria or turned too sour to eat.
- An aphorism, or 'old saw', that discourages picking late and therefore inferior berries after Michaelmas (29th September) night: 'Devil pisses, or spits, on the blackberries'!
- Use a long-handled litter picker to pull down the higher up branches, which often have the juiciest berries.

Stems

The stems are woody and roughly 5-sided (usually) with hooked spines, prickles and hairs (sometimes gland tipped and sticky) The stems tangle and sprawl together and amongst other hedgerow shrubs.

FOOD WEB

Nectar gathered by insects.
Berries eaten by birds, mammals and us. The leaves are eaten by caterpillars and deer.

IMPERSONATORS:

	blackberry <i>R. fruticosus</i>	raspberry <i>R. idaeus</i>	stone bramble <i>R. saxatilis</i>	dewberry <i>R. caesius</i>
Ripe fruit	Shiny black	Red and downy	Red	Frosted
Leaf	Separate leaflets - palmate	Pinnate, white-woolly below	Trefoil	Ternate, overlapping

Plus **cloudberry** (*R. chamaemorus*) with its orange fruit and palmate leaves.



PLANT ID: blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* L. (agg.)

What's in a name? Blackberry's Latin name describes a bushy shrub with red fruits. Bramble, its common name, comes from old English: bremel or braemel. It was also used as a nickname for someone who was a 'prickly person'.

Botany glossary (part 1)

Anther pollen-bearing part of the Stamen (male) found at its tip.

Drupe fleshy fruit with one or more seeds, each surrounded by a stony case, e.g. Cherry.

Globular sphere or spherical in shape.

Leaflet smaller sub-component of a compound leaf; a smaller leaf

Botany glossary (part 2)

Palmate a compound leaf in nature that has three or more distinct leaflets that arise from a central point rather like the fingers of a hand, e.g. Horse chestnut.

Petiole a stalk of a leaf.

Pollen fine powdery grains produced by the anthers of stamen that contain the male gametes.

Serrated teeth a saw-like edge to a leaf of varying sharpness and bluntness.

Stigma female part of the flower that transfers pollen collected from pollinators (e.g. bees) to the ovary.

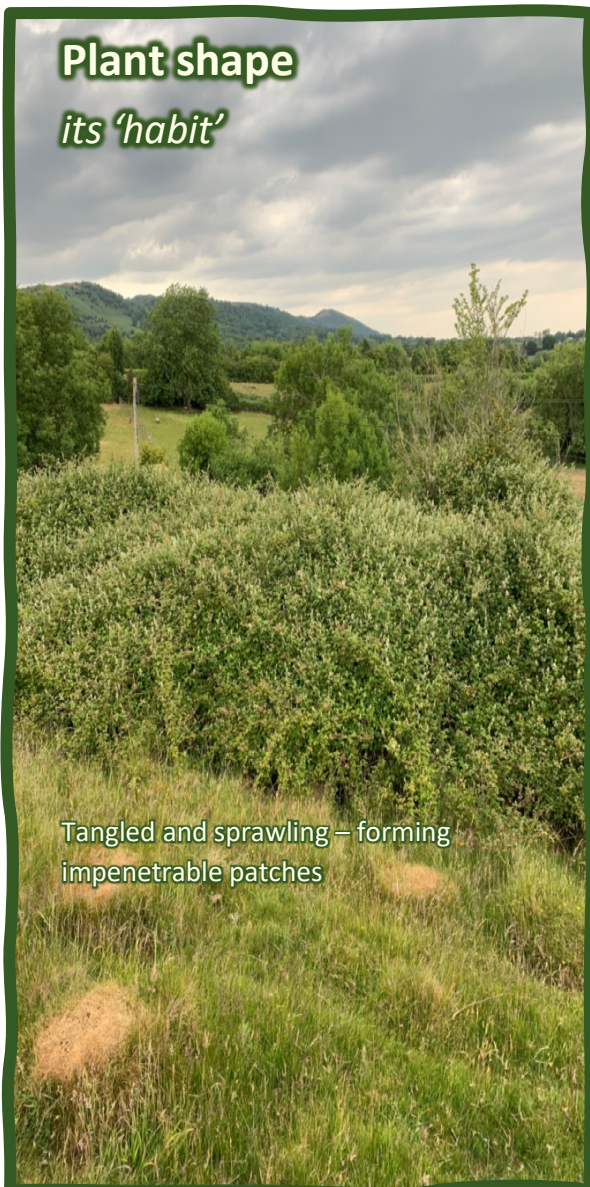
Stamen male part of the flower, each comprising a filament and anther.

Get up close to the blackberry by taking a virtual tour using the Pappus film library.



Plant shape

its 'habit'



Tangled and sprawling – forming impenetrable patches

Oldest known examples

Blackberry seeds have been found in the latrines, ancient peat profiles and stomachs of recovered bog bodies from pre-historic times, e.g. Tollund Man in Denmark.

Blackberries, like dandelions, are not a single species, but a grouping of many similar micro-species that differ in a variety of ways such as leaf shape, fruit shape, colour and taste.



Global species risk of extinction

(IUCN – Red Data List)

Blackberry's existence is classed as of 'Least Concern'

