

# Weed Identification

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Blackberry nightshade

***Solanum nigrum***



[Pictorial glossary of plant part terms used in this guide.](#)

Family: Solanaceae

Form: Herb

Origin: Native of Europe, Asia and northern Africa.

Flowers/Seedhead: Present throughout year.

Description: Variable bushy annual or short-lived perennial herb to 80 cm high. Stems green to purple. Leaves 3–8 (rarely to 13) cm long, 2–5 (rarely to 7) cm wide, dark green, ovate-lanceolate, margins undulate, entire or shallowly-lobed; leaf stalk 1–3 (rarely to 7) cm long, narrowly winged in the upper section. Seeds numerous (20–35 seeds per fruit), flattened, minutely pitted.

Distinguishing features: Distinguished by absence of prickles; almost hairless to covered with long shaggy hairs which are simple and may be non glandular or glandular; flowers in groups of 4–12, petals white; berries globeshaped, green at first but maturing dull black to purple-black, 6–8 (rarely to 11) mm wide; seeds pale yellow, 1.8–2.2 mm long.

Dispersal: Spread by seed.

Confused With: Other *Solanum* species, see taxonomic texts for detailed distinguishing features. *S. americanum* often has shiny, flecked fruit.



Dull black mature fruit

photos G. Sainty

Notes: Widespread and very common in Australia. Found in many temperate and tropical regions around the world. One of Australia's worst weeds of intensive agriculture. Competes vigorously for space and nutrients especially in Solanaceae crops such as tomatoes. Known to be host to numerous nematodes, fungi and viruses that are indirectly a threat to associated crops. Green fruit and leaves may at times contain toxic alkaloids.

References:

*The World's Worst Weeds*. L. Holm et al., 1977, pages 430– 434. *Flora of NSW*. G. Harden (ed.), Vol. 3, 1992, page 356.

Web References: [Search Australian web sites for further information on this weed.](#)



Juvenile



Extensive roots



Seeds, calyx & fruit skin



Shiny flecked  
fruit & flower of  
*S. americanum*

This weed has been included in the WEEDeck field guide as card H74

More information about WEEDeck is available from [Sainty & Associates Pty. Ltd.](#)

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