Scientific Name: *Rubus pubescens* Raf. **Family:** *Rosaceae*

Common Names: dewberry, trailing raspberry, running raspberry

Illustration of *Rubus pubescens*

Plant Description

Trailing perennial, with slender runners, 10 to 100 cm long, rooting at tips; flowering stems erect, up to 30 cm tall, with soft, long hairs; leaves 5 to 15 cm long, compound, 3 leaflets (occasionally 5), oval to diamond spaded, pointed, sharply double toothed; flowers 1 to 3, from crown of plant or from nodes on runners, white to pale pink, erect, stalks often covered with gland tipped hairs; flowers are monoecious (Moss 1983).

Fruit: Fruits dark red, drupelets in clusters (raspberry) about 1 cm across (Johnson et al. 1995).

Seed: Rough, light yellow to brown seed, oval to half moon shape, 2 to 3.5 mm long.

Habitat and Distribution

Rich moist woods and opening (Johnson et al. 1995).

Seral Stage: Mid to late stage.

Distribution: Northern Yukon, District of Mackenzie to James Bay, northern Quebec, Newfoundland south to Washington, western Montana, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, New Jersey; Colorado, Nebraska (Moss 1983).

Phenology

Flowers bloom at the end of May into early June and berries appear the end of July to early August.

Pollination

Most *Rubus* spp. are insect pollinated (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008, Plants for a Future n.d.).

Genetics

2n=14, 28 (Moss 1938).

Symbiosis

Many *Rubus* spp. benefit from mycorrhizal associations (Vestberg 1992).

Seed Processing

Collection: Should be collected as soon as they are ripe to prevent losses due to birds (Young and Young 1983).

Harvest Dates: Harvest at the end of July to early August.

Cleaning: Macerate in water, decant, screen, and dry (Young and Young 1992).

Storage: Seeds should be dried and stored at low temperatures (Young and Young 1992).

Longevity: *Rubus* spp. remain viable the soil seed bank for long periods of time (Ladyman 2006) and studies have shown no loss in viability after 26 years of storage (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008).

Propagation

Natural Regeneration: Reproduction mostly vegetative but also by seed (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008).

Pre-treatment: Seeds need to be scarified. This can be done by soaking seed for 20 to 60 min in 1% sodium hyperchlorite solution or sulphuric acid as well as mechanically by nicking the seed coats (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008, Young and Young 1992).

Direct Seeding: *Rubus* spp. germinate best when planted in the fall or late summer (Young and Young 1992).

Vegetative Propagation: *Rubus* spp. can be propagated by tip-layering, rooting suckers, and crown division, and by taking leaf-bud and stem cuttings (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008).

Micro-propagation: Can be micro-propagated (Debnath 2004).

Aboriginal/Food Uses

Food: Berries can be eaten fresh or cooked as jam (Tannas 1994).

Medicinal: Given to mothers before, during and after birth of child to prevent miscarriage, reduce labour pains and increase milk flow (Tannas 1997). Can also be used a laxative (Tannas 1997).

The leaves are astringent and stomachic. A decoction has been to treat the vomiting of blood and blood-spitting. An infusion of the plant, combined with wild strawberry (*Fragaria* spp.), has been used to treat irregular menstruation (Plants for a Future n.d.).

Other Uses: A purple to dull blue dye is obtained from the fruit (Plants for a Future n.d.).

Wildlife/Forage Usage

Wildlife: Fruits are eaten by insects, birds, rodents and bears (Bonner and Karrfalt 2008).

Livestock: Forage is poor to fair, not generally used by livestock (Tannas 1997).

Grazing Response: Increaser (Tannas 1997).

Reclamation Potential

In a review of Syncrude and Suncor plot data, Geographic Dynamics Corp. (2006) found that *R. pubescens* did not invade any of the plots. *Rubus* spp. do well on disturbances can be used for erosion control (Tannas 1997). Would make a good groundcover in moist, forested northern landscapes (Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center 2009).

Notes

They may hybridise with *R. arcticus* (Moss 1983).

Photo Credits

Photo 1: Tracey Slotta @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database.

Line Diagram: *Rubus pubescens* L. from Bilder ur Nordens Flora (1917-1926).

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