

Invasive Rubus Community Science Project

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator and Plant Taxonomist/Herbarium Curator

Program Description

The Invasive Rubus Community Science Project aims to survey and document the presence and abundance of four non-native *Rubus* species (*Rubus armeniacus*, *R. praecox*, *R. lacinatus* and *R. vestitus*) in select Portland parks and natural areas. Non-native *Rubus* (blackberry) is widespread in the Pacific Northwest and may cause negative impacts to native habitats and biodiversity, especially in riparian and disturbed sites. We are interested in knowing the distribution of three of these *Rubus* species (*Rubus armeniacus*, *R. praecox* and *R. lacinatus*) in order to determine if a potential biological control agent (a blackberry rust that only infests two of these species) might be effective in its management and control (depending on the local abundance of these species), and to additionally survey for the early detection of the relatively new invader to northern Oregon, *R. vestitus*.

Outcomes from this project will be a regional map and survey results that show the distribution of the four *Rubus* species and several short publication notes (and/or presentations), which may have potential implications for the management of these invasive *Rubus* species.

Responsibilities

- Become familiar with key plant structures (inflorescence spines, stamen lengths, hairy stems, leaf shape and lobing, etc.) in the identification of the four *Rubus* species
- Visit and survey at least 2 pre-designated sites for these four *Rubus* species
- Record observations and submit data sheets
- Report volunteer service hours monthly

Qualifications

- Willingness to expand knowledge of plant identification skills
- Comfortable spending time outdoors and walking on trails
- Ability to follow survey standards and correctly fill out datasheets
- All volunteers must pass a background check

Time Requirements

Invasive Rubus volunteers should be available to visit at least 2 assigned parks or natural areas on their own (following training) from April through August. Each site/survey visit should include enough time for walking around and looking for the four *Rubus* species. Time involved will depend on the size of the assigned park/natural area and degree of *Rubus* infestation. Smaller parks may have their survey completed within an hour. Larger sites may require several hours for walking, observing and data/specimen collection, and/or a few repeated visits to confirm *Rubus* to species. There are no set time shifts for this project, but Invasive Rubus volunteers are encouraged to volunteer during daylight hours and at times that works best for their schedule. Volunteers will be assigned park/natural areas that are most convenient for the volunteer.

Training

Invasive Rubus volunteers are required to attend an introductory training session (scheduled as needed). During the training, volunteers will:

- Learn about Hoyt Arboretum, Hoyt Arboretum Friends and its partnership with Portland Parks & Recreation
- Learn about identification of the four *Rubus* species
- Choose at least two Portland-area parks/natural areas to survey
- Learn to fill out the survey form and submit data collected

Additional training opportunities are available to Invasive Rubus volunteers on an ongoing basis.

Benefits

Hoyt Arboretum volunteers are eligible for benefits once **15 hours of volunteer work** have been completed. Benefits include Hoyt Arboretum Friends (HAF) membership, a 20% discount in the Visitor Center, discounts on classes, invitations to members-only events and an annual volunteer appreciation celebration.

To Apply: Please email volunteer@hoystarboretum.org or call (503) 823-1649 for more information.