

Pest Bulletin



Toxic Weed Series



Black Nightshade with immature and mature berries.



BLACK NIGHTSHADE

Black Nightshade (*Solanum americanum*) is an annual/short lived perennial herb. It grows to a maximum height of 1.2 m and has white/pale blue flowers borne in bunches. Leaves alternate on the stem and have wavy edges. When the plant is mature the leaves look rather like tomato leaves. Black Nightshade also produces round berries that are green when immature and black when mature. This plant has a taproot root system.

Black Nightshade can be found all throughout the province including Vancouver Island. It is commonly found on disturbed sites, such as roadsides, gardens and cultivated fields. It can easily be found in commercial fields all over the Fraser Valley. This weed normally blooms in mid-June and the berries are usually developed by mid-late July. Each plant is capable of

producing thousands of seeds, which can last in the soil for a number of years. They are commonly dispersed by humans and wild animals such as birds and rodents.

Most of the plant parts contain glycoalkaloids which are poisonous to humans, and animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and pigs. It is generally accepted that the green berries are the most poisonous part of the plant. Control of Black Nightshade can be achieved mechanically through repeated mowing and cultivation or pulled by hand if there are only a few. Chemical control with glyphosate and dicamba has also been shown to be effective, depending on what crop the weed is in.



References

- http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/weedsbc/pdf/black_nightshade.pdf
- http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.jump?p_psn=56&p_type=all