

SWEETBRIAR ROSE

Rosa rubiginosa L.

Plant Symbol = RORU82

Contributed by: NRCS Plant Materials Center, Pullman, Washington



Rosa rubiginosa. Richard Old, XIDservices.com

Alternate Names

Common Alternate Names: eglantine rose (USDA ARS, 2012)

Scientific Alternate Names: *Rosa eglanteria* L. (USDA ARS, 2012)

Uses

Rosa rubiginosa is valued by gardeners for its sweet, apple-like fragrance. It is often misidentified as a desirable species in natural areas and mistakenly planted for wildlife habitat. This rose can be very aggressive and dominate an area within a few years. It should not be planted in a home landscape, for wildlife habitat, or for any other use.

Weediness

This plant is weedy and invasive in some regions or habitats and may displace desirable vegetation (Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health, 2012). Consult with your local NRCS Field Office, Cooperative Extension Service office, state natural resource, or state agriculture department regarding its status. Weed information is also available from the PLANTS Web site at <http://plants.usda.gov/>. Please consult the Related Web Sites on the Plant Profile for this species for further information.

Description

General: Rose family (Rosaceae). *Rosa rubiginosa* is a shrub introduced from Europe. It grows up to 10 feet tall and has multiple arching stems. Stems have thorns that are stout, flattened, downward-curving and unequal in size. Leaves are alternate and pinnately divided into 5 to 7 leaflets with doubly serrated margins and gland-tipped teeth. The undersides of leaves have hairs and stalked glands that impart a sweet aroma when crushed. Flowers are solitary or in small clusters at the ends of branches and bloom in June to July. Flowers have five pale to dark pink petals 0.6 to 0.8 inches long, five sepals, usually 10 or more pistils, and multiple stamens. Sepals have slender lateral lobes and stalked glands, curve backward at the time of anthesis and are deciduous. Fruits ripen in September to October, are smooth, bright red, 0.4 to 0.6 inches long, and persist on the plant after ripening. Plants reproduce sexually by seed and vegetatively by layering and suckering (Hitchcock and Cronquist 1973; Young and Young, 1992; Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture 2012).



Rosa rubiginosa flowers. Richard Old, XIDservices.com

Distribution: *Rosa rubiginosa* grows in most states and provinces throughout the US and Canada. For current distribution, consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Web site.

Habitat: This plant is found along roadsides, in pastures, Conservation Reserve Program fields, and natural areas.

Adaptation

Sweetbriar rose is adapted to all soil types with moderate fertility, and can tolerate moderate saline conditions (USDA NRCS, 2012). It requires 18 to 45 inches of annual precipitation. It is not shade tolerant (USDA NRCS, 2012).



Fruit (rose hips) of *Rosa rubiginosa*. Pamela Pavek



Thorns on lower stems of *Rosa rubiginosa*. Pamela Pavek

Pests and Potential Problems

Numerous galls are often found on *Rosa rubiginosa* stems. The galls are caused by a gall-forming wasp (*Diplolepis rosae*) which, like the plant, is a European species. The galls do not cause any harm, and are hosts for parasitoid wasps. The plant is susceptible to fungal diseases such as powdery mildew (*Sphaerotheca pannosa* var. *rosae*) and downy mildew (*Peronospora sparsa*).

Environmental Concerns

Birds and other wildlife eat the hips of sweetbriar rose and spread the seed. Areas invaded with sweetbriar rose can become dominated by the plant, resulting in a decline in native plant species and other desirable vegetation. The forage value of pastures with sweetbriar rose decreases rapidly following the invasion and spread of the

plant. In addition, sweetbriar rose impedes the movement of livestock, wildlife and vehicles.

Control

Sweetbriar rose is difficult to control due to its large size and regeneration from sprouts. Control often requires multiple years of treatment. Plants can be eliminated by extracting from the ground with an ATV or other vehicle in the spring, then spraying the sprouts that emerge with an herbicide. In areas where plants are numerous, mowing with a brush machine will facilitate herbicide application. Effective herbicides include glyphosate, picloram plus 2-4-D, and triclopyr ester (Peachey, 2012).

Contact your local agricultural extension specialist or county weed specialist to learn what works best in your area and how to use it safely. Always read label and safety instructions for each control method. Trade names and control measures appear in this document only to provide specific information. USDA NRCS does not guarantee or warranty the products and control methods named, and other products may be equally effective.

Seeds and Plant Production

Rosa rubiginosa has 31,000 seeds per pound (USDA NRCS, 2012). The seed does not require a stratification period if it is fresh, however if it has a chance to dry, a stratification period is required to break dormancy (Young and Young, 1992).

Cultivars, Improved, and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

This plant is sold by garden nurseries and numerous cultivars are available. However, gardeners should consider its invasive nature before planting. Spread of its seed by birds and wildlife cannot be prevented unless the rose hips are removed soon after development. Several native rose species are available as alternatives that have similar aesthetic attributes and pose no threat to surrounding plant communities.

References

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/> and visit the PLANTS Web site at <http://plants.usda.gov/> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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