

NIGHTSHADES

The nightshade family includes tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, and eggplants. **Atropa belladonna**, or deadly nightshade, is **NOT a common weed in British Columbia**. Several different nightshade weeds are found in Kamloops.

BITTERSWEET NIGHTSHADE (*Solanum dulcamara*)

- Climbing vine up to 3 metres long.
- A perennial in zones 4 and warmer.
- Leaves are egg-shaped with two small lobes at the base. They have an unpleasant odour when crushed.
- Clusters of berries are **BRIGHT RED** when ripe.
- Grows best in disturbed, moist soil.
- Long underground roots can send up new plants.
- **TOXIC** to people and animals, though some parts of the plant are used medicinally. The **UNRIPENED BERRIES** are especially **POISONOUS**.



TO CONTROL

- Wear gloves when handling and hand-pull if you can get all the roots.
- Can be covered with landscape fabric for at least two years to kill it.
- More info: <https://www.tnrd.ca/invasive-plant/bittersweet-nightshade/>

BLACK NIGHTSHADE (*Solanum nigrum*; *Solanum americanum*)

- Annual or short-lived perennial that grows upright (not a vine).
- Prefers high-nitrogen soils (look for it in your vegetable garden).
- Leaves are oval to triangular, and have smooth or wavy edges.
- Star-shaped flowers are white with yellow centres. Berries are black when ripe.
- Black nightshade can be edible, but **REQUIRES THOROUGH RESEARCH** before eating because it can also be **POISONOUS**.
- **UNRIPE BERRIES ARE POISONOUS** to people and animals.



TO CONTROL

- Hand pull. Don't let it go to seed!

Sources: British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries. *Guide to Weeds in British Columbia*. 2002
Edmonds, J., and James Chweya. *Black Nightshades: Solanum Nigrum L. and Related Species*.
International Plant Resources Institute, 1997.

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