Plant Data Sheet

Oplopanax horridus Miq./ Devil's Club
(there are no subspecies, varieties or forms)

Washington Native Plant Society Webpage

www.wnps.org/plants/ oplopanax_horridus.html

Range
From south-central Alaska southward along the coast on the west side of the Cascades to southern Oregon, and east to southwestern Yukon territory, Idaho and western Montana. Disjunct populations also occur on several islands in Michigan and Ontario.

Climate, Elevation
Climate varies from maritime, submarine, to continental types. Elevation ranges from sea level to 5000 feet.

Local occurrence (where, how common)
Roadside ditches. A dominant component of understories of various Pacific Northwest (and boreal) forests with moist to wet soil conditions. Seems to occur more often in mature to older forests (personal observation).

Habitat preferences
Moist forests; wet ravines,drainage, or bottom areas; areas associated with hillside seeps and springs, stream corridors, or roadside ditches. Prefers shade and nitrogen-rich soils. A wet-site indicator.

Plant strategy type/successional stage (stress-tolerator, competitor, weedy/colonizer, seral, late successional)
Primarily found in moist understories of late seral, climax, and old-growth forests. Best growth is attained in climax (mature) forests.

Associated species
Western hemlock, western redcedar, red alder, salmonberry, Vaccinium spp., ladyfern, mosses, foamflower and many other forbs.

May be collected as: (seed, layered, divisions, etc.)
Seed or cuttings.

Collection restrictions or guidelines
Threatened in Michigan.

Seeds:
Flowers in late spring to midsummer, depending upon location. Fruits ripen approximately 4 weeks after flowering and persist through winter. Collect seeds when fruit turns dark red, usually late summer. Seeds are tan at maturity. Hand strip fruits from plants and collect in plastic bags.

Cuttings:
Take semi-softwood cuttings at budbreak, in late spring to early summer. Cut long stems from sprawling horizontal branches. Place in paper bags and keep moist.

Seed germination (needs dormancy breaking?)
Similar Asian species have morpho-physiological dormancy. Suggested 72 hour running water soak, followed by a minimum of a 100 day cold moist stratification/100 day warm moist stratification/100 day cold moist stratification. Germinates the second year.

Seed life (can be stored, short shelf-life, long shelf-life)
No information.

Recommended seed storage conditions
No information.

Propagation recommendations (plant seeds, vegetative parts, cuttings, etc.)
Propagation is slow, either by seed or cuttings.

Seeds: Extract and clean seeds. Stratify as described above, or sow in late fall and irrigate thoroughly prior to winter stratification. Should germinate the 2nd year.

Cuttings: Cut stems into 13 cm sections containing at least one bud scale scar. Place in well-drained potting mix with perlite, with one half of the diameter above the soil. Keep cuttings outside in shade but irrigate. Can start in mistbed if available and then pot up and put in shadehouse. End distal to budscar usually roots. Harden over winter. Takes 1.5 years - outplant in 2nd September.

Soil or medium requirements (inoculum necessary?)
Moist, rich soils preferred. Well to poorly drained with sandy, silty, or loamy textures ok.

Installation form (form, potential for successful outcomes, cost)
Both methods are slow, but seeds can be collected more easily. Outcome of each unknown.

Recommended planting density
6-8 feet apart (Dave's Garden)

Care requirements after installed (water weekly, water once, never water, etc.)
Shade required during seedling production and on ouplanting sites. Moist soils probably best.

Normal rate of growth or spread; lifespan
Information on devil's club regeneration is scant. Seedling growth is slow to moderate. Devil's club reproduces vegetatively, but the method is uncertain - possibly by rhizomes or layering. Initial establishment is slow.

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