



Giant Hogweed

Heracleum mantegazzianum

Invasive Plant Alert



One of the biggest threats to natural ecosystems in Saanich is the spread of invasive non-native plants. The District of Saanich appreciates the cooperation of all residents in removing Giant Hogweed from private property.

For assistance see contacts on reverse.

A priority invasive of concern with serious human health risks.

Why is Giant Hogweed a problem?

- **PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARD:** risk of severe skin burns, scarring and temporary or permanent blindness.
- The sap in the stalk, stem and leaves is toxic, causing dermatitis after contact with sunlight (effects within hours or days). Scarring can last from months to lifetime. See Worksafe BC Hogweed Alert for first aid www.worksafebc.com.
- Hogweed outcompetes native flora and causes soil erosion on steep slopes and stream banks.

What does it look like?

- Large plant **up to 6 m tall** with deeply lobed leaves and umbrella-shaped white flower heads up to 1 m across.

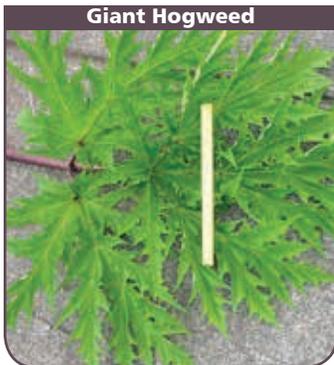
Giant Hogweed is often confused with native Cow Parsnip (much smaller, less than 3 m tall)

Leaves: Large, very deeply lobed with jagged edges; up to 2.5 m long.

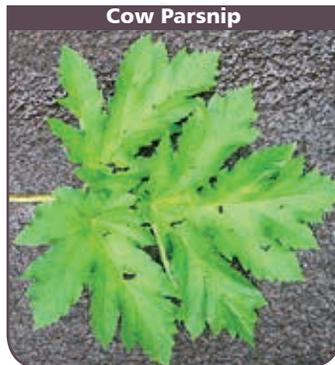
Leaves: Wider leaflet, less lobed and jagged than Giant Hogweed; up to 40 cm long.

Stalks: Stalks are purple spotted or streaked, hollow and 5 to 10 cm in diameter. Stiff hairs.

Stalks: Stalks are usually green but lower stems may also have some purple. Soft hairs.



Giant Hogweed



Cow Parsnip

Flowers: Blooms in June to July: large, umbrella-shaped white flower head up to 1 m.

Flowers: Blooms in May to July: flower heads are much smaller to only 0.2 m diameter.



Giant Hogweed



Cow Parsnip



Giant Hogweed



Cow Parsnip

Note: Cow-parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*)

Invasive Plant Alert

Habitat and Biology:

- Perennial plant from the Apiaceae (carrot or parsley) family.
- Mature plants flower in May, producing up to 100,000 seeds (viable in soil up to 15 years).
- Reproduction by seeds and possibly some vegetative reproduction (from buds on rootstalks).
- Large taproot will rapidly re-sprout if mowed.
- Found especially along ditches, roadsides, riparian areas, open forests, marine shorelines and disturbed sites.

Distribution:

- Native to Asia. Invasions in BC are primarily southwestern BC, including Vancouver Island.

What should I do?

- **Spread the word, not the plant:** don't buy or plant Giant Hogweed.
- **Inform:** please contact Saanich (as below) to report locations.
- **Stop seed spread:** brush/clean off clothing, tires and equipment before leaving the infested area.
- **Remove:** if you have properly identified Giant Hogweed on your property, use the best control methods (below) to eliminate it.
- **Monitor:** annually return to the site in the spring and summer for several years to continue treatment.
- **Replant:** after effectively eliminating this species over time, replant with non-invasive plants (such as appropriate native species).

Caution wear protective clothing when in contact with this plant:

- Heavy, water-resistant gloves (dispose of immediately afterwards).
- Waterproof coveralls with long sleeves or long sleeved shirt and pants that are not cotton or linen (sap can soak through); thicker clothing so the hairs do not penetrate.
- Full face protection.
- Wash clothing and tools after contact.

Small populations (< 25 plants)

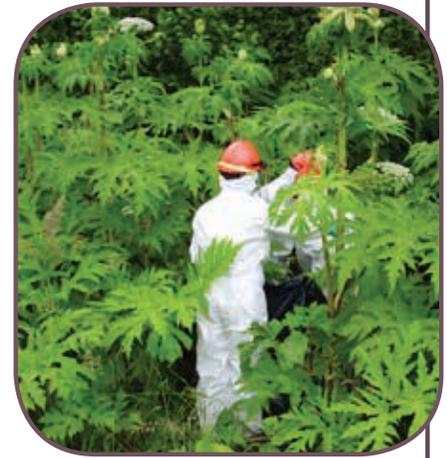
- **Manual removal:** remove young plants by hand, pulling gently to remove all the roots. A small hand tool should be used to ease the roots out.
- Large, mature plants can be removed by cutting the stem near the base, then using a shovel to dig out the roots, focusing especially on the central root and removing at least 8 to 12 cm below the surface.
- For all manual removal care should be taken to minimize soil disturbance.
- Ideally remove in the spring and repeat, as required in early summer.
- If removing late, during flowering season cut and bag flower-heads first for secure disposal.
- Mulching over the area disturbed by the removal may be beneficial.

Large populations

- Contact Environmental Services to assist you in making a plan to treat large populations based on the site conditions and best management practices.

Proper Disposal

- Currently, the best option is to place all plant parts in garbage bags labelled "invasive species" and take to Hartland Landfill.
- **DO NOT COMPOST!** Flowers can still form viable seeds after removal.



Other resources

Invasive Species Council of BC

Coastal Invasive Species Committee

WorkSafe BC Alert

Report-a-Weed BC

Who do you call?

Contact Saanich for assistance and more information about Giant Hogweed, other invasive plants and volunteer opportunities.

On Private Land:

Saanich Environmental Services:
250-475-5471 or planning@saanich.ca

On Public Lands:

Saanich Parks:
250-475-5522 or parks@saanich.ca

www.invasives.saanich.ca

Noxious Weeds Bylaw No. 8080:

The District of Saanich requires all landowners clear their property of any noxious weeds and other vegetation that could spread or become a nuisance