

POISON HEMLOCK

Conium maculatum

Apiaceae, the parsley family

Category: Containment

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FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Poison hemlock is an herbaceous plant that outcompetes crops and native vegetation, decreasing biodiversity.
- It contains highly toxic alkaloids posing a serious health hazard to livestock and humans, if ingested. Handling plant can also cause skin irritation in humans.
- Has similar appearance to Western hemlock which lacks the stem striations and purple blotching.

Description

- Annual or biennial that can grow up to 9 feet tall.
- Hollow, green stems have purple blotching and striations.
- Has an unpleasant musty odor.
- Has shiny green, fern-like, compound leaves that are pinnately lobed and can reach 12 inches long.
- Small, white flowers form in umbrella-shaped clusters.

Introduction and Movement

- Poison hemlock is native to northern Europe, western Asia and North Africa, introduced as a garden ornamental.
- Prefers to inhabit disturbed and moist sites such as roadsides, pastures, fields, ditches, and riparian areas.
- It can easily spread by careless disposal of garden material, as well as seed dispersal by wind, water, and human/animal vectors.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Poison hemlock and eradicate infestations on your property.
- When gardening, always research plants before planting and purchase seeds from licensed nurseries.
- Always remove and properly dispose of all seed and plant materials on vehicles, clothing, shoes and pets before you exit or enter outdoor recreational sites.
- Use care when removing plant materials as all parts of the plant are poisonous. Contact your county weed superintendent for eradication options.
- Always Remember To: **KNOW WHAT YOU GROW & KNOCK IT OFF!**

Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/14820>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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POISON HEMLOCK DISTRIBUTION MAP

