

GIANT HOGWEED

Heracleum mantegazzianum
Apiaceae, the carrot or parsley family
Category: EDRR

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FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Giant hogweed is an invasive plant that has the ability to form monocultures, decreasing biodiversity.
- The plant can alter soil chemistry, cause increased soil erosion, and restrict stream access.
- Contains a toxic sap that when touched can cause phytophotodermatitis resulting in severe skin irritation/blistering.

Description

- Biennial or perennial herb that can grow up to 15 feet tall.
- Leaves are large, 3-5 inches wide, compound, and deeply incised. Undersides have short bristles.
- Stems are hollow, 2-4 inch diameter, green with purple blotches, and covered with white bristles.
- Flowers are white, flat-topped umbels, 2.5 inches across.
- Resembles native cow parsnip which lacks purple stem blotching and only grows 5-8 feet tall with leaves 1-1.5 inches wide.
- Each plant can produce 5,000 - 100,000 seeds.

Introduction and Movement

- Giant hogweed is native to southwestern Asia and was introduced as an ornamental plant.
- Inhabits riparian areas and disturbed sites, and can tolerate a wide range of soil types from gravels to clays.
- It can easily spread through natural seed dispersal via wind and water, but also through illegal importation for use in ornamental gardens.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, learn how to identify Giant hogweed and report any sightings.
- When gardening, always research plants before planting and only 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 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/26911>
- Idaho's Noxious Weeds 9th Edition, University of Idaho: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL816.pdf>.



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DISTRIBUTION MAP

