

INFORMATION ABOUT GIANT HOGWEED

PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT. ACT RESPONSIBLY.



DESCRIPTION

Giant hogweed is an invasive, exotic and toxic plant. It poses a risk to human health and to the environment.

In humans, contact with the sap of giant hogweed, combined with exposure to light (natural or artificial ultraviolet rays), can cause skin lesions. These lesions are similar to burns. In addition, when this plant grows in an area, it spreads rapidly and hinders the growth of other plants already present.

Giant hogweed grows in cool, moist areas, such as:

- Along the banks of waterways;
- Along ditches;
- Along railway lines;
- Along roads;
- In meadows;
- In vacant lots.



HOW TO LIMIT THE PRESENCE OF GIANT HOGWEED ON YOUR PROPERTY



Avoid sowing, planting, multiplying or transporting it.



Avoid mowing it, as mowing fragments can promote its spread.



If it is already present on your property, remove it as early as possible.



ELIMINATE GIANT HOGWEED

Given the harmful effects of giant hogweed on the environment and on health, it is very important to prevent this plant from spreading. Therefore, avoid sowing, planting, multiplying or transporting it.

Before taking action to control giant hogweed, you must:

- Correctly identify the plant so as not to confuse it with cow parsnip;
- Locate the colonies (groups of plants), ideally in early spring;
- Protect yourself to avoid burns caused by contact with the plant's sap.

If you need to handle giant hogweed, protect yourself properly:



Cover all parts of your body with non-absorbent clothing (synthetic and waterproof materials).
Examples: pants, long-sleeved shirt, rubber gloves covering the wrist and forearm.



Pay special attention to the ends of your clothing: protect your wrists, ankles and neck well.



Protect your eyes and face with a face shield.



AFTER HANDLING

- Remove your clothing and take off your gloves by turning them inside out;
- Avoid letting the clothing you wore while handling the plant come into contact with other objects or clothing, to prevent contamination with sap;
- Wash your clothing in the washing machine before wearing it again;
- Wash tools that came into contact with the plant sap, such as pruners and brush cutters, with soap and water;
- Wash your hands and face with soap and water.



ALLERGIC REACTIONS CAUSED BY GIANT HOGWEED



Description

Giant hogweed is a toxic exotic plant. The sap of giant hogweed contains toxins that are activated by light (natural or artificial ultraviolet rays). Contact with the sap, combined with exposure to light, causes pain and skin lesions similar to burns.



Symptoms

Painful, sometimes severe, lesions may appear up to 48 hours after skin contact with giant hogweed sap. Lesions are characterized by:

- Redness and swelling of the skin;
- Blisters and fluid-filled bumps;
- Superficial or more severe burns (first or second degree).



Call Info-Santé 811 for more information on what to do in case of contact with giant hogweed sap.

HOW TO DISTINGUISH GIANT HOGWEED FROM COW PARSNIP

Cow parsnip, also known as wild parsnip, looks very similar to giant hogweed. However, cow parsnip is not invasive. It does not pose a risk to the environment.

Descriptions	Giant Hogweed (Invasive)	Cow Parsnip/Wild Parsnip (Native to Québec)
Height	The plant can grow 2 to 5 metres (6 to 16 feet) tall.	Cow parsnip does not exceed 3 metres (10 feet) in height.
Flower colour	White	White
Stems	• Very robust and hollow; • 4 to 10 cm (1 ½ to 4 inches) in diameter; • Covered with coarse white hairs, scattered over the entire stem but especially at the base of the leaf stalks; • Has numerous reddish-purple spots, large and well-defined.	• The stem is entirely covered with soft white hairs, giving it a felted appearance. • Some parts of the stem may have a reddish tint, but the spots are not as colorful as on giant hogweed.
Leaves	• Leaves are divided into 1 to 3 smaller leaves, deeply cut and pointed, which can reach 1.5 metres (5 feet) wide and 3 metres (10 feet) long.	• The underside of the leaves has a felted texture, abundantly covered with soft, woolly white hairs.

Giant Hogweed



Cow Parsnip/Wild Parsnip



HOW TO PREVENT GIANT HOGWEED FROM GROWING

Plants growing in isolation or covering a small area



You can cut the root of young plants with a sharp round shovel. Start in early spring and repeat the action every 2 weeks to exhaust the plants;



Repeat the cutting every year for several years to completely eliminate the plants;



Use a rotary tiller or cultivator to eliminate small plants growing in high density;



You can cover the area with a geotextile fabric after removing the plants when the colony is not too large and the site does not present too many constraints, in order to limit regrowth.

Mature plants or covering large areas



- Cut the plants about 15 cm (6 inches) above the ground;



- Repeat at least 2 to 3 times during the spring;



- Cut the root about 20 cm (8 inches) below the soil surface.



- Use a sharp round shovel;



- Work the soil, for example by plowing to a depth of about 24 cm (10 inches). This will limit regrowth;



- Let cut plants dry out;



- If plants have seeds, prevent them from spreading;



- Destroy the flower heads (umbels) by placing them in sturdy plastic bags and sealing them tightly. Leave the bags in the sun for at least one week;



- Do not compost any part of the plant;

- To prevent giant hogweed from invading your property again, you can plant new plants in the treated area. Prefer native plants from your region that grow quickly. Contact your local garden center for advice.



IMPORTANT – A MUNICIPAL PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL WORK WITHIN THE RIPARIAN PROTECTION BUFFER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MORIN-HEIGHTS

Giant hogweed may be located near shorelines and wetlands. If this is the case, a permit from the Municipality must be issued before carrying out any work within the riparian protection buffer.

To obtain a permit, you must provide:



A completed and signed permit application form, available at:
<https://www.morinheights.com/Formulaires-sommaire>



A riparian revegetation plan (mulch, gravel, rock landscaping, machinery, mowing and any other materials or structures that inhibit vegetation growth are not permitted within the riparian buffer).



A description of the method that will be used to remove giant hogweed (work must be done manually or with hand tools only when in the riparian protection buffer).

**IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT NO OTHER WORK BE CARRIED OUT
BEFORE THE PERMIT IS ISSUED.**



WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR WATERWAYS AND BIODIVERSITY.

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