

Giant Hogweed, an invasive plant, has been identified in our region. Residents are cautioned that if touched, the plant can cause skin to become severely irritated.



Photo courtesy of the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver

## IDENTIFICATION

### SIZE

A large plant, growing up to 4.5 - 6 meters tall.

### LEAVES

Deeply incised, hairs on underside are stiff, dense, stubby, and can exceed 2.5 m in length.

### STEMS

Dark reddish purple blotches on the stalks.

### FLOWERS

Large white “umbrella-like” flower clusters.

Giant Hogweed is easily mistaken for Cow Parsnip. The leaves can help to identify Giant Hogweed.



Photo courtesy of the BC Ministry of FLNRO

## Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum Maximum*)

Cow parsnip leaves are NOT shiny, are broader and less serrated than giant hogweed.



Photo courtesy of the BC Invasive Species Council

## Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum Mantegazzianum*)

Giant hogweed leaves are shiny and large, with leaf edges very coarse and serrated, like a jagged saw edge.

## Health & Safety Alert

Giant hogweed sap contains toxins that cause dermatitis severe skin reaction when it touches skin exposed to sunlight. Damage to the skin may include: welts, rashes, blistering, and pigmented scarring that may last for up to six years.

## Ecological Impacts of Giant Hogweed

Giant hogweed is highly competitive due to vigorous early-season growth, tolerance of full shade, and seasonal flooding. Infestations can cause erosion of stream banks, particularly when winter dieback exposes soil to rain. Because of its large size and rapid growth, it can quickly dominate invaded ravines and stream banks. This reduces the amount of habitat available for native plants and wildlife.

## Landfilling

### DO NOT COMPOST.

- 1) Dispose of all plant parts in 3-4 mil poly (.003 to .004 inch thick).  
Extra thick bags are required to avoid ripping by cut stems or thorns.
- 2) Label bags 'Invasive Plants' and tie off using a gooseneck tie and a zap strap
- 3) Take to one of the CVRD drop off depots:

**Bings Creek Recycling Centre**  
**Peerless Road Recycling Centre**

## References/Links

Coastal Invasive Species Committee  
Invasive Species Council of British Columbia  
Toxic Plant Warning, WorkSafeBC



Gooseneck Tie Off



Photo courtesy of King County Noxious Weed Control Program, Seattle, WA

## Warning

Contact with sap can happen by brushing against any broken plant parts, handling plant material, or even by touching tools or mowing equipment used for giant hogweed control.

## Removal of Giant Hogweed

Prevent seed development and you will keep the plants contained to their original location.

- Cut off flowers to prevent seeds from growing.
- Excavate plants, severing roots 8-12 cm below the soil surface.
- Return to site to check for regrowth.
- Immature plants can be controlled by covering with black plastic or by mowing at 2 week intervals. Chemical controls can be effective, foliar applications are most effective in spring followed by a summer application on late appearing sprouts.



Photo courtesy of the Fraser Valley Regional District

## Precaution

Suit up with waterproof gloves, a rubber raincoat and pants, and eye protection to ensure skin and eyes are protected from the sap of the plant.

No biological control agents are available.  
For more information refer to: [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)

**After careful identification, please report sightings of Giant Hogweed to the Coastal Invasive Species Committee at 1.844.298.2532 and provide specific location of suspect plant.**